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Hafa Adai!

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NMI and US govt reach deal on submerged lands transfer

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

The CNMI and the federal government have agreed on terms to transfer the title of the submerged lands around the northern islands of Maug, Farallon de Pajaros, and Asuncion, breaking the months of impasse in the negotiations over these terms.

Torres

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres disclosed this in an interview with reporters yesterday on his second day back from a trip to the nation's capital where he, among others, met with federal officials to discuss proposed terms that the CNMI had found disagreeable.

Some of the terms would have bound the CNMI to expend large amounts of capital and resources on management plans that federal authorities could ultimately reject, and would have allowed the federal government to enter the property to determine compliance with a conservation easement and revoke the grant at any time in the event that they determine the CNMI noncompliant.

Torres believes the recent com-

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Ogumoro out as DCCA secretary

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

Ogumoro

In what his administration calls the "final" reorganization of his Cabinet, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres has accepted the courtesy resignation of Department of Community and Cultural Affairs Secretary Laura Ogumoro.

See OGUMORO on Page 4

After year's absence, all-hazard Konfitma exercise kicks off

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

After a year's hiatus, the 24-hour full-scale all-hazard exercise Konfitma kicked off yesterday on Saipan.

The exercise began at 6am with a scenario at the former Far Eastern Broadcasting Building area. Several other scenarios followed at different places on the island, *Saipan Tribune* learned.

At about 2:30pm, the fourth scenario was about a car explosion that triggered a fire near the Division of

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FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Two masked firefighters prepare their gear as other firefighters are on standby shortly after they extinguished a fire triggered by a car explosion scenario in Lower Base yesterday afternoon. The scenario was part of the 24-hour full-scale all-hazard exercise Konfitma.

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Three members of the Rotary Club of Saipan shared their experiences during their recent trip to the Rotary District Conference in Japan.
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ASIA
President Benigno Aquino III led ceremonies Monday to transfer the remains of a long-dead president to a Philippine heroes' cemetery.
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LIFE & STYLE
The Vatican newspaper praised Oscar-winning film "Spotlight" on Monday.
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Local

Re-lighting of Beach Road pathway targeted in August

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
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REPORTER

Late afternoon or night joggers may soon be able to enjoy exercising on Beach Road once again as the pathway lights are targeted to be repaired this year after being inoperable for a while.

The Marianas Visitors Authority has taken the lead on the project and is targeting August for completion.

According to MVA, the repairs are among their latest destination enhancement project that will allow the local community and visitors to more safely utilize the pathway after dark for exercise and recreation.

"Using the Saipan Beach Pathway along our beautiful western lagoon is a refreshing experience enjoyed by both locals and visitors which is why we have undertaken this re-energizing project," MVA managing director Perry Tenorio said, "Once completed this project will allow the pathway to be enjoyed more safely into the evening hours, as well."

Although the project is targeted to be finished by August, MVA is also looking into the possibility of funding from Federal Emergency Management Agency to repair structural portions of the pathway damaged by Typhoon Soudelor, which may extend the project beyond the said month.

The project includes inventory and repair or replacement of all walkway lights, lighting closets, and bollard lights, which is projected to cost $684,000.

MVA funded the project in coordination with the Department of Public Works.

"In the interest of cost-saving, the new lighting will be LED and there will also be a new digital timer switch to turn off the lights at a certain time," MVA community projects manager Martin Duenas said.

"However, keeping the lights on will be one way to deter the criminal activity that caused the lights to be unusable in the first place, so this will be a decision for the responsible government entity to whom we turn over the project," he added.

MVA also called on the public to help maintain the pathway lights.

"We ask all community members, walkers, and drivers to help keep the project on-track and the lighting operational thereafter by looking for and reporting any suspicious activity here in the evenings. This lighting will benefit the community, so the community has a stake in protecting it," Duenas said.

To mark the completion of the pathways lights and its re-lighting, MVA will hold an evening Ayuda Fun Run, which will support a local non-profit organization. The event is also part of MVA's 40th anniversary celebration projects.

LAWYER OF DEFENDANT IN FAKE MARRIAGES ALLEGES:

'US govt continues to make unsubstantiated claims vs client'

A defense lawyer has asserted that the U.S. government is still making unsubstantiated claims in opposing the continued release of his client, Qiong Lu Pua, a woman who was slapped with a 12-month and one day imprisonment for orchestrating two sham marriages so that her brother and friend could obtain green cards.

Attorney Mark B. Hanson said the U.S. government continues to make unsubstantiated allegations regarding Pua's "ties to a foreign country, extensive contacts in China, and significant sums of unexplained income."

Noting that these are not new allegations, Hanson said the U.S. government moved for Pua's detention on the basis of these claims following sentencing, but the court permitted the defendant to remain at liberty, albeit with the additional condition that she surrender her minor son's passport.

Hanson discussed the U.S. government's alleged unsubstantiated claims in Pua's reply to the prosecution's opposition to her motion for release from prison pending appeal.

Pua requested the U.S. District Court for the NMI to allow her release pending the results of her appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Pua is appealing the Ninth Circuit to reverse the U.S. District Court for the NMI's denial of her motion for a judgment of acquittal.

In the U.S. government's opposition, assistant U.S. attorney Russell H. Lorfing disclosed, among other things, that Pua has $70,000 in unexplained income deposited in her account in 2014 and 2015.

Lorfing said with her money, the defendant has the financial means to flee. He said the defendant's ties to a foreign

See MARRIAGES on Page 4

Woman accused of enticing minor girl to engage in sex for cash signs plea deal

Alexandra Castro Macabalo has signed a plea deal with the U.S. government in connection with the allegations that she enticed a 15-year-old girl to engage in sex for cash with a government official in 2013.

Assistant U.S. attorney Garth R. Backe informed the U.S. District Court for the NMI on Monday that the U.S. government and Macabalo have signed a plea agreement.

Backe requested the court to set the case for a change of plea hearing on Monday, March 7, at 9am.

The plea deal is sealed.

Federal Bureau of Investigation agents arrested Macabalo last April after a complaint was filed in court, charging her with enticement of a minor to engage in prostitution and other sexual activity. The indictment was later subsequently filed.

Last December, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona granted the U.S. Probation's request to revoke the pretrial release of Macabalo for smoking methamphetamine or "ice" and violating other pre-trial conditions.

(Ferdie de la Torre)

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DPL: Selected land use plan contractor asks for delay

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

The Department of Public Lands was set on issuing a notice of proceed to a contractor to develop a "CNMI comprehensive public land use plan" to guide public land development in the CNMI last month, but that contractor has asked for a delay, or pushback to a start date of August.

DPL Secretary Marianne Concepcion-Teregeyo is considering options to go with one of the other two contractors who submitted a bid for the project. However, there was a "great disparity" in the funding, or the project costs, between the two contractors and the one chosen for the project.

"There is some internal issues with the contractor and they are asking for a delay," Teregeyo told *Saipan Tribune* in an interview yesterday. "They are asking for approval to begin the plan in August, which means it kicks [the project] back a year or two. It has a one-year deliverable."

"Now I have to decide if we will re-announce" the land use plan, she added. "But we are short money because the price difference for the remaining two bids is huge."

Patricia Rasa, DPL director of planning, called the price difference "extreme" but added they could check with the two proposers if they could come back with their "best and final" offer.

Teregeyo preferred to withhold the costs figures when asked for them, as she clarified that a contract has not been signed and a re-issuing of a request for proposal was still on the table.

"The Department is ready," Teregeyo said. "The contractor is asking for a delay. Do I accept the delay? Or do I cancel that and announce a new RFP, or do I go back to the existing two [proposals] and ask for a best and final," Teregeyo explained.

It appears a final decision will depend on the budget.

"We put in $1 million for our budget for 2017, for the land use plan," Teregeyo said. "So it will almost depend if we get that $1 million appropriated. If not, we are going to have to wait for August for this existing contractor."

Michael Jackson files complaint against 8th counsel

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Michael Anthony Jackson has filed a disciplinary complaint against his eighth court-appointed counsel, prompting the Superior Court yesterday to appoint a new counsel to represent him in the case charging him for kidnapping and raping a 15-year-old girl on Saipan.

» 9th counsel appointed for his rape case

At a status conference yesterday, court-appointed counsel Mun Su Park requested the court to continue trial in Jackson's case and appoint a new counsel for the defendant.

According to Park, Jackson has filed a disciplinary complaint against him before the CNMI Bar Disciplinary Committee, which is likely to impair the client-lawyer relationship or the lawyer's ability to represent the client.

Park said having considered the concerns of CNMI taxpayers paying attorney's fees for indigent defendant, he will waive attorney's fees in representing Jackson in this case.

Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho granted Park's motion and appointed attorney Tiberius Mucano as Jackson's new court-appointed counsel.

Camacho noted that Jackson had filed disciplinary complaint against his seven other court-appointed counsels in this case.

Camacho vacated the jury trial set for March 7, 2016, and set a status conference for March 9, 2016, at 9am.

On April 26, 2013, the jury found Jackson guilty of kidnapping and sexual assault in the first degree. Camacho, who decided on the misdemeanor charge, also found the defendant guilty of assault.

On May 15, 2013, Camacho slapped the then-34-year-old Jackson with a jail maximum term of 40 years and six months without possibility of parole.

Jackson then appealed. He asked the CNMI high court to reverse his convictions and remand the matter for a new trial, or in the alternative for re-sentencing.

At the appeal hearing, Park argued as court-appointed counsel for Jackson. Then-assistant attorney general Graef Clayton argued for the government's opposition.

Last Dec. 30, the CNMI Supreme Court reversed the conviction and remanded Jackson's case to Superior Court

See MICHAEL on Page 4

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The Judiciary's records indicate that there is property held in the Superior Court's third party fiduciary account that has gone unclaimed for a period of one year or more. The apparent owners of this property are:

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14. Jerry Manglonzo
15. Jun Miao Yuan
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20. Jun Qing Chen
21. Wen Jian Zheng
22. Yakui Yang
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26. Thomas Aldan Duenas
27. Jihong Jin
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IN THE MIDST OF IRP ACTION DELAYS:

Power plant foundation cracks trigger need for 'emergency' procurement

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
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REPORTER

An emergency procurement was needed for the repair of the foundation of one of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s generators—demonstrating the sorry state of the utility company's power infrastructure.

During the board of directors' meeting last Saturday, power generation manager Richard Cano sought for the board of directors' approval for an emergency procurement.

Cano said immediate repair of the foundation of Engine No. 5 is needed due to its structural issue.

It was determined that the whole structure of the power plant has problems with the vibration caused by the engines which is a foundation issue and that foundation bolts are breaking because the structure was not solidly built and not able to withstand the vibrations.

Prior repairs to foundations of Engine Nos. 7 and 8 and of up to 16 foundation bolts were made, but a crack that was discovered as early as August last year triggered the need for the repair of Engine No. 5.

Cano said they were able to get the exact quotation to procurement by the end of October last year. The price tag of the project is $450,000.

Cano said Engine No. 5 is on standby, meaning it is not base load but they use it whenever repairs are needed to other engines.

He added that they "don't want to break the engine" that's why there is a need to fix its foundation.

Because of the immediate need, they were advised to go through the emergency procurement process.

"Based on the fact that we have a minimum amount of reserve that we have right now, if something happens to one of the engines unexpectedly, then we need to bring that engine on to be able to cover that and still maintain some kind of capacity," CUC legal counsel James Sirok said, "You want this repaired immediately. You can't afford to wait for three to five months for the normal procurement process."

The board approved the emergency procurement, but even so, it was estimated that it will take two to three months to get the contractor on island and the repair will take about five weeks.

Cano said the company, Alphatec which was formerly in Japan, is now based in Spain. Several specialists are needed from Spain but most of the workers will be from Malaysia.

No one from Saipan and Guam can do this specialized project, according to Cano.

Ailing infrastructure

The state of CUC's infrastructure has been part of the CUC board's discussion in the past months. Several engines, some of which are up to 40 years old, are undergoing repairs. Their assets are over 70 percent depreciated.

Conversations on CUC's low reserve of only about 44 percent of its total production were also brought to the board during prior meetings.

The discussion for the emergency procurement was made before the CUC board's discussion on its Integrated Resource Plan during the same meeting; however, the majority of the board still chose to delay decision on the plan, which was supposed to help CUC choose feasible, cost-effective, and reliable resources for their power generation. It has been in the works since 2014.

MIFICPA tax seminar on March 5

The Marianas Institute of Filipino CPAs and Accountants is pleased to invite you to this year's tax seminar to be held on Saturday, March 5, from 8am to 12pm at the Raraina, Aqua Resort Club. This year's tax seminar will focus on tax updates for 2016, changes in tax laws, tax filing requirements. David J. Burger, managing partner of Burger Comer Magliari, Certified Public Accountants, will be the guest speaker.

Registration starts at 7:30am.

Registration fee for members is $20. Non-members and non-accountants are also welcome at the same fee which includes lunch and certificate of attendance.

We encourage participants to turn in their tax questions ahead of time to facilitate the question and answer portion of the seminar. Please feel free to contact any of the organizers below.

For reservation and more details, please call or email the following:

- Butch Ordas at 789-9276 (butchordas@yahoo.com)
- Noli Santos at 285-6810 (nolsantos@yahoo.com)
- Rose Badidoy at 588-0425 (roseannbadidoy@yahoo.com)
- Lois Manese at 286-8663 (eloisa_manese@yahoo.com) ***(PR)***

MICHAEL

From Page 3

for a new trial.

The justices ruled that Camacho erred in not repeating substantive jury instructions at the close of evidence.

The justices said closing instructions allow the jury to focus on the law, the evidence, and its responsibilities in order to arrive at a proper determination.

Police said the girl was walking along Tun Joaquin Doi Road in Finasisu from an Internet café and was on her way home on Oct. 9, 2010, at about 1am when Jackson forced her into his car, brought her to an open field at the Franciso C. Ada-Saipan International Airport, and raped her inside his car. He then forced the girl to smoke methamphetamine or "ice."

The girl later managed to run away, police said.

LANDS

From Page 1

munication has led to them covering this "gap" that he said needed to be addressed before" the sides moved forward.

"I believe we have come to an agreement that we will get the land back," Torres said. "But the caveat is we won't be obligated to do the management unless it is funded by U.S. Congress. We are waiting for the final report or proposal. But that is the agreement.

"They will transfer the title to us with a management [responsibility] based on funding availability," he went on to say. "We want to close this up in the next several months."

Torres said he, along with his chief of staff Matt Guerrero, spoke with Department of the Interior assistant secretary for Insular Affairs Esther Kia'aina, Eileen Sobeck, the head of NOAA Fisheries, and two of their legal counsels, over these terms in their meeting.

Torres said that the Interior was "requested to come in as a mediator, which worked out best for us."

Torres called the agreement the "best option and opportunity for us to take back the land and work on the management portion provided that it is being funded."

"We both agreed on what should be on the proposal. I am waiting for that draft to be given to me. And when that draft is given I will give that to our legal counsel and concur it with our attorney and then we will move forward," he said.

KONFITMA

From Page 1

Fish and Wildlife compound in Lower Base. Several police officers were seen blocking the road leading near the site. Firefighters responded, assessed the situation, and then extinguished the blaze. Masked firefighters were then seen investigating the scene.

Konfitma is partnership between the CNMI and the U.S. Department of Defense, and various local and federal agencies to test the response capabilities of law enforcers and many agencies not just the incidents but also handling the hot weather condition.

Konfitma is an annual exercise that started in 2009 on Saipan. There was no exercise last year because of disasters, including Super Typhoon Soudelor.

Office of the Governor public information specialist L.J. Castro in an interview said Konfitma is an annual exercise training in tandem with local and federal first responders.

Castro said the purpose of the training is to make sure that if real world emergency situation happens such as bioterrorism and organized crime that occur within the region, the people that are tasked with protecting the community are ready to stand.

"From around the clock, all of the first responders that are involved in the training are on call, on notice from patrol police to TRET Team (Tactical Response Enforcement Team), search and rescue," he said.

He said the participants are local police, Fire Department, Customs, Ports Police, other law enforcement agencies, and FBI.

CNMI Homeland Security and Emergency Management special assistant James Deleon Guerrero and his team and trainers are the over-all-in charge of the drill.

Members of the Civil Support Team from Guam, Hawaii, and Utah also joined in the annual training by assisting all the scenarios.

Castro said the scenarios include human trafficking, bioterrorism, and chemical attacks.

"A few scenarios we started in the morning. It pretty much keep all of us our toes as the day progresses," Castro said.

Castro said during the exercise sirens are going off and explosives are blowing up.

He said people should not panic because it's only an annual drill.

OGUMORO

From Page 1

"In light of your service and contributions, it is with a heavy heart and sincere gratitude that we accept your resignation effective March 21, 2016," said Torres in a letter to Ogumoro.

"You have dutifully taken charge of one of the CNMI's most vital departments. In caring for our people—from our promising youth to our beloved *man'amko*—and through the assistance you have provided to those among us who need a helping hand, you have made a beneficial impact to the lives of many. For that, we thank you."

Torres, in his statement yesterday, said an announcement on a new DCCA secretary is forthcoming.

The move to replace Ogumoro comes about two weeks after Ogumoro issued a memo of "proposed termination" to Office on Aging director Walter Manglona, who has said on a social media account that "it was not" Torres or Lt. Gov. Victor Hocog who initiated his proposed termination, and that it was Ogumoro.

Since that time, the Torres administration has said they would be delving into the matter accordingly and that the Aging Office would be preparing "findings for [Torres'] review" on his return from a trip in Washington, D.C.

Torres met with Manglona at around 1:30pm in the Governor's Office yesterday, on his second day back from the trip,

The Torres administration called this the "final" move to reorganize the Cabinet following the untimely passing of late Gov. Eloy S. Inos last December. Other moves included the recasting of Department of Public Lands secretary Pete A. Tenorio into a senior policy advisor and accepting the courtesy resignations of Veterans Affairs Office director Joseph Palacios, among others.

MARRIAGES

From Page 2

country, extensive contacts in China, and the significant sums of unexplained income suggest the real possibility that she is a flight risk.

In Pua's reply yesterday, Hanson said Pua has been allowed to travel between Guam and Saipan, through international airports and in possession of her passport.

Hanson said Pua has never missed a court appearance or failed to comply with her conditions of release.

The lawyer said Pua has family ties to the Mariana Islands and there is no evidence that she has financial resources to flee even if she wanted to.

"The record is clear that Mrs. Pua is not a flight risk," Hanson stressed.

Pua remained at liberty after the verdict while she awaited sentencing.

Hanson said for a person to be released pending sentencing, the law requires a court to find "by clear and convincing evidence that the person is not likely to flee or pose a danger to the safety of any other person or the community."

Hanson said Pua again remained at liberty pending imposition or execution of her sentence.

"In other words, she was allowed to remain at liberty pending notification from the U.S. Marshal Service that Bureau of Prisons had designated a facility for her to serve her sentence," he said.

Pua was sentenced last Jan. 29.

Hanson said Pua's circumstances have not changed since the time of the verdict, nor have they changed since the time of her sentencing.

He said his client has been allowed to remain at liberty because the court has already determined that she is not a flight risk. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Rotarians share trip to district confab in Japan

Three members of the Rotary Club of Saipan shared their experiences during their recent trip to the Rotary District Conference in Japan during the group's weekly meeting yesterday at the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

Rotarians Ken Kato, Ivan Ilmov, and Norbert Sablan attended the Rotary Club International District Conference held in Tokyo, Japan last Feb. 23 and 24.

Kato talked about the hospitality and special treatment they received from the host Rotarians.

In particular, he mentioned a traditional fire ritual ceremony that signifies cleansing of negative energies and bad vibes for individuals. He believes a fellow Rotarian from Japan arranged the fire ritual ceremony especially for them.

Sablan spoke about the overall district conference. The two-day conference allowed them to meet many of their Rotarian counterparts from Japan as more than 2,000 members attended.

"Rotary Club of Saipan is part of a nine-club composition called Pacific Basin Group. Guam has five clubs, Saipan has one, Chuuk one, Pohnpei has one, and one club in Palau," said Sablan, who added that Japan by itself has 91 Rotary clubs.

"Once a year, the Rotary District conference is held to allow Rotarians from different areas to meet for the purpose of fellowship, for sharing successes and challenges, and for providing and offering assistance to each other if needed," he further explained.

Ilmov also added some details of what transpired during the two-day district conference. ***(Bryan Manabat)***

FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON

Representatives from the Rotary Club of Saipan were among those who attended the recent District 2750 conference in Tokyo, Japan, including director Sapuro Rayphand, Rotarian Ken Kato, assistant district governor Norbert Sablan, and president-elect Ivan Ilmov.

Rotarians from Japan to visit Saipan

A big group of Rotarians from Japan will be visiting Saipan next month.

According to the Rotary Club of Saipan president-elect Ivan Ilmov, the Rotarians will be from one of their sister clubs, Rotary Club of Tokyo-Hachioji South.

About 50 members of the said club are expected to visit the island for three days from April 23 to 25.

The club will move their Tuesday weekly meetings to Monday on April 25 for the special guests.

Ilmov said they will be looking at projects which both Rotary clubs can work on.

"This club wants to make stronger relationship. After we made our first student exchange program, they want to come and participate in our meetings and create projects that we can do together," Ilmov said.

The Rotary Club of Saipan partnered with the Hachioji-South club for the Rotary Youth Exchange Project last January where two students participating in their High School Interact Clubs were able to participate.

This month, some students from Hachioji-South will also visit Saipan starting March 23 and will be hosted by the island's local club.

Aside from Hachioji-South, the Rotary Club of Saipan is also sisters club with Rotary Club of Wakayama-Naka, Rotary Club of Tokyo-Atago, and Rotary Club of Vladivostok of Russia. ***(Frauleine Villanueva-Dizon)***

Applicants' schedule released for March PH mobile mission

The Philippine Consulate General in Guam, in coordination with the office of the Philippine honorary consul to the CNMI Glicerio Arago, will hold another mobile consular outreach this next week.

The mobile mission, set for March 5 to 8, will be the second mission this year.

For this mission, a list of 400 applicants for passport applications and renewals has already been determined based on the individuals who signed up last January and weren't able to be processed due to the limited slots available for the earlier mission.

One hundred applicants per day will be processed during the four-day mission.

The schedule for the biometrics capturing of these applicants can be viewed at the Facebook page of the Philippine Consulate General-Agatna, Guam (http://on.fb.me/1OKR4Eb).

Applicants included in the list are advised to be present in the venue on the date and time indicated in the schedule. Time slots of those who will not show up on the schedule allotted for them will be cancelled.

To avoid delays in the processing of said applications, applicants are advised not to fold copies of the original scanned requirements that were submitted last January.

All e-passport applications require "personal appearance" and applicants are advised to wear proper attire (i.e. shirt with collar).

For more information and confirmation, call (670) 235-3128 and look for Mel Santos. ***(Frauleine Villanueva-Dizon)***

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GPPC, INC.
JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

(01) Accounting Technician: $6.10 - $7.50/hour
College graduate with at least five years experience as an Accounting Technician. Capable of performing combined routine calculations, posting and verifying duties to obtain primary financial data and maintain accounting records.

(01) Administrative Assistant: $6.10 - $7.50/hour
Must be a college graduate with a minimum of two years experience. Knowledgeable on construction business. Preferably someone who can operate Microsoft Office & Power Point Programs.

(02) Architectural Drafter Technician: $6.10 - $8.25/hour
College graduate with a minimum of five years experience as an Architectural Technician. Able to prepare detailed drawings of architectural/structural features of buildings, as well as drawings and photographic relief of maps used in civil engineering projects such as, highways, bridges and other public works. Knowledgeable on building materials, engineering practices and mathematics used to complete drawing drafts.

(04) Auto Body Repairer: $6.10 - $6.50/hour
Must be a high school graduate with at least two to five years experience as an Auto Body Repairer. Knowledgeable on repairing and refinishing automotive vehicle bodies and straightening vehicle frames.

(02) Automobile Electrician: $6.10 - $6.75/hour
A minimum of five years work related experience. Able to diagnose and undertake electrical repairs on a wide variety of vehicles and heavy equipment. Must be knowledgeable on electric motor, alternator, starter, and motor rewinding.

(40) Carpenters: $6.10 - $7.50/hour
Must be a high school graduate with a minimum of five years experience as a Carpenter. Knowledgeable on constructing, erecting, installing, and/or repairing structures and fixtures made of wood including: concrete forms, building frameworks, partitions, joists, studding, rafters, wooden stairways, windows, door frames, and hardwood floors.

(4) Civil Engineering Technician: $6.10 - $8.25/hour
College graduate with a minimum of two years experience as a Civil Engineering Technician. Able to apply Theory and Principles of Civil Engineering in planning, designing, and overseeing construction, structure maintenance and facilities under the directions of engineering staff or physical scientist.

(01) Construction Manager: $3,125.00
Must be a college graduate or with a minimum of five year's experience as a Construction Manager, including managers in specialized construction fields, such as, carpentry or plumbing. Knowledgeable on planning, directing, and coordinating activities concerning construction and maintenance of structures, facilities, and systems with subordinate supervisory personnel. Able to participate in the conceptual development of a construction projects and oversee its organizations such as, scheduling, budgeting, and implementation.

(01) Diesel Fuel Injection Pump Technician: $6.10 - $7.25/hour
High School Graduate with a minimum of five years work related experience. Must be knowledgeable on repairing diesel fuel injector components, including pumps, injectors and turbochargers. Able to diagnose, service and maintain fuel injection systems.

(01) Diesel Mechanic: $6.10/hour
Must be a high school graduate with at least five years work-related experience.

(17) Electrician: $6.10 - $7.15/hour
Must be a high school graduate with a minimum of two years experience as an Electrician. Knowledgeable on installing, maintaining and repairing electrical wirings, equipment and other fixtures. Able to install or service street lights, intercom systems, and electrical control systems.

(2) Electrical Engineering Technician: $6.10 - $6.50/hour
College graduate with a minimum of two years experience as a Electrical Engineering Technician. Able to apply Theory and Principles of Electrical Engineering in planning, designing, and overseeing construction, structure maintenance and facilities under the directions of engineering staff or physical scientist.

(3) General Maintenance: $6.10 - $6.35/hour
High school graduate with at least five years experience as a General Maintenance. Able to install various equipment.

(15) Heavy Equipment Mechanic: $6.10 - $7.50/hour
High school graduate with a minimum of five years experience as a Heavy Equipment Mechanic. Knowledgeable on diagnosing, adjusting, repairing, and overhauling automobiles, cranes, bulldozers, graders, excavators, trucks, conveyors and other heavy equipment typically used in construction.

(30) Heavy Equipment Operator: $6.10 - $7.15/hour
High school graduate with at least two years experience as a Heavy Equipment Operator. Must be knowledgeable on operating several types of power construction equipment such as, motor graders, bulldozers, trenching machines, scrapers, compressors, pumps, derricks, shovel tractors and front-end loaders to excavate, move and grade earth, erect structures, pour concretes and etc.

(02) Machinist: $6.10/hour
A high school graduate with at least five years experience as a Machinist.

(40) Mason: $6.10 - $7.00/hour
High school graduate with a minimum of three years experience as a Mason. Knowledgeable on smoothing and finishing poured concretes such as, floors, walks, sidewalks, roads and curbs using variety of hand and power tools. Able to align forms for sidewalks, curbs, gutters, patch voids and use various saws to cut expansion joints.

(03) Mechanical Engineering Technician: $6.10 - $6.50/hour
College graduate with a minimum of two years experience as a Mechanical Engineering Technician. Able to apply Theory and Principles of Mechanical Engineering in planning, designing and overseeing construction, structure maintenance and other facilities under the direction of engineering staff or physical scientist.

(10) Painter: $6.10 - $6.55/hour
A high school graduate with a minimum of five years experience as a Painter. Knowledgeable on operating and tending to various painting machines. Able to paint transportation equipment surfaces like automobiles, buses, trucks, trains, boats, airplanes and etc.

(20) Plumber: $6.10 - $7.50/hour
A high school graduate with a minimum of five years experience as a Plumber. With knowledge to install, assemble, alter and repair pipelines that carry water, steam, air, or other liquids and gasses. Able to install heating and cooling equipment and mechanical control system.

(01) Q.C. Asphalt Paving Technician: $6.10 - $6.50/hour
A high school graduate with a minimum of two years work-related experience.

(02) Rigger: $6.10 /hour
A high school graduate with a minimum of two years work-related experience.

(01) Sheet Metal Worker: $6.10 - $6.75/hour
A high school graduate with a minimum of two years experience as a Sheet Metal Worker. Must be knowledgeable on installing pre-fabricated sheet metal ducts used for heating, air-conditioning equipment and etc.

(8) Steel Worker: $6.10 - $7.25/hour
A high school graduate with a minimum of five years experience as a Steel Worker. Knowledgeable on rising, placing, and uniting iron and steel girders, R-columns and other structural members to form a complete structures or structural frameworks. Able to erect metal storage tanks and assemble pre-fabricated metal buildings. Position and secure steel bars or mesh in concrete forms in order to reinforce concrete structures.

(02) Tower Crane Operator: $6.10 - $6.35/hour
A high school graduate with a minimum of two years work-related experience. Must be able to comply with all safety regulations and work with minimal supervision.

(2) Truck Driver: $6.10 - $7.10/hour
A high school graduate with at least two to five years experience as a Truck Driver. Able to drive a tractor, trailer and truck with a capacity of at least 26,000 GVW for various construction material transportation.

(16) Welder: $6.10 - $7.00/hour
Must be a high school graduate with a minimum of two years experience as a welder. Knowledgeable on using hand-welding, flame cutting, hand soldering, and other brazing equipment to weld or join metal components or to fill holes, indentations, or seams of fabricated metal products.

Interested applicants may apply at GPPC, INC. office located at As Perdido, Saipan, CNMI.
A copy of police clearance must be attached to the application. Incomplete application will NOT be accepted.
Skills, testing maybe required. Salaries will commensurate to experience and qualifications.
Closing date will be on March 04, 2016.
GPPC, INC is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

CARE hopes to finish all projects in 22 months

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Advocates for Recovery Efforts is hoping a 22-month timeframe would be enough to finish all repairs and rebuild projects of homes that were destroyed or damaged when Typhoon Soudelor pummeled Saipan last year.

Out of 591 families, 130 needed total repairs of their houses that were leveled by Soudelor's hurricane-like winds.

The villages of Kagman and Dandan had the highest percentage of homes that need total rebuilding with 14 percent and 12 percent of the 591 cases, respectively, according to data sourced by the American Red Cross' International Disaster and Crisis Management team. The data is as of Jan. 26, 2016.

CARE director Jenny Hegland said that they already begun with the repair projects with the total rebuild to start soon once they are able to bring more skilled laborers on Saipan. CARE is planning to bring in off-island workers to help in the rebuilding projects.

"Total rebuild projects will start as soon as we are able to bring skilled labor to the island since there are no contractors available otherwise to work on these rebuilding projects. The longer-term disaster case management program will continue for 22 months," said Hegland.

"While we would love to complete all assistance with repair and rebuilding in that timeframe, it's difficult to anticipate whether or not that would be possible due to uncertainties in the availability of skilled laborers. Our timeframe will also be dependent on our ability to bring in both in-kind and financial resources."

Hegland added that as of now they are not having problems when it comes to availability of building materials. They are also still seeking monetary donations to continue supporting CARE's activities, construction materials for the repair and rebuilding projects, and travel support to bring in the skilled volunteers.

"We're looking at all available options just to bring in the skilled laborers. One of that is airline mileage [frequent flyer program] but we are not looking at bringing in only one guy, we need a group of skilled laborers. Anything that could help in bringing in the people we need."

Hegland said CARE is looking to use $5 million of the $13.9 million estimated total cost of unmet housing needs that they would need as operating budget.

"The operating budget is the amount we are realistically trying to seek. Of that, about 92 percent would be budgeted for direct rebuilding expenses like labor and building materials. Less than 8 percent would be budgeted for operational overhead. The $5 million operating is not above and beyond the $13.9 million," she added.

Hegland said they also asked for the assistance of Habitat for Humanity, which has an office in Guam, in rebuilding the damaged homes, while representatives from the Skywalker Communications Group, which launched the GreenStay housing project that uses pre-fabricated and environment-friendly materials, attended last January's CARE meeting.

Habitat for Humanity, a non-profit group involved in building affordable houses, at this time was "not able to provide direct building support in Saipan."

"But through our dialogue we've been able to learn best practices in working with skilled and other volunteer laborers to build homes. Skywalker has expressed an interest in assisting families with restoring their homes, however no donations or partnerships have been formalized at this time."

The CNMI lost an estimated $9.18 million in revenue in the last quarter, the time when the IT&E Internet outage and typhoons Soudelor and Champi occurred.

APEX BUILDERS, INC.
JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

(02) Auto Body Repairer: $6.10 - $6.50/hour
Must be a high school graduate with at least two to five years experience as an Auto Body Repairer. Knowledgeable on repairing and refinishing automotive vehicle bodies and straightening vehicle frames.

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A minimum of five years work related experience. Able to diagnose and undertake electrical repairs on a wide variety of vehicles and heavy equipment. Must be knowledgeable on electric motor, alternator, starter, and motor rewinding.

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(2) Civil Engineering Technician: $6.10 - $8.25/hour
College graduate with a minimum of two years experience as a Civil Engineering Technician. Able to apply Theory and Principles of Civil Engineering in planning, designing, and overseeing construction, structure maintenance and facilities under the directions of engineering staff or physical scientist.

(6) Electrician: $6.10 - $7.15/hour
Must be a high school graduate with a minimum of two years experience as an Electrician. Knowledgeable on installing, maintaining and repairing electrical wirings, equipment and other fixtures. Able to install or service street lights, intercom systems, and electrical control systems.

(2) General Maintenance: $6.10 - $6.35/hour
High school graduate with at least five years experience as a General Maintenance. Able to install various equipment.

(6) Heavy Equipment Mechanic: $6.10 - $7.50/hour
High school graduate with a minimum of five years experience as a Heavy Equipment Mechanic. Knowledgeable on diagnosing, adjusting, repairing, and overhauling automobiles, cranes, bulldozers, graders, excavators, trucks, conveyors and other heavy equipment typically used in construction.

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High school graduate with at least two years experience as a Heavy Equipment Operator. Must be knowledgeable on operating several types of power construction equipment such as, motor graders, bulldozers, trenching machines, scrapers, compressors, pumps, derricks, shovel tractors and front-end loaders to excavate, move and grade earth, erect structures, pour concretes and etc.

(20) Mason: $6.10 - $7.00/hour
High school graduate with a minimum of three years experience as a Mason. Knowledgeable on smoothing and finishing poured concretes such as, floors, walks, sidewalks, roads and curbs using variety of hand and power tools. Able to align forms for sidewalks, curbs, gutters, patch voids and use various saws to cut expansion joints.

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College graduate with a minimum of two years experience as a Mechanical Engineering Technician. Able to apply Theory and Principles of Mechanical Engineering in planning, designing and overseeing construction, structure maintenance and other facilities under the direction of engineering staff or physical scientist.

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A high school graduate with a minimum of five years experience as a Steel Worker. Knowledgeable on rising, placing, and uniting iron and steel girders, R-columns and other structural members to form a complete structures or structural frameworks. Able to erect metal storage tanks and assemble pre-fabricated metal buildings. Position and secure steel bars or mesh in concrete forms in order to reinforce concrete structures.

(16) Welder: $6.10 - $7.00/hour
Must be a high school graduate with a minimum of two years experience as a welder. Knowledgeable on using hand-welding, flame cutting, hand soldering, and other brazing equipment to weld or join metal components or to fill holes, indentations, or seams of fabricated metal products.

Interested applicants may apply at APEX Builders, Inc. office located at GPPC Inc. building, As Perdido, Saipan, CNMI. A copy of police clearance must be attached to the application. Incomplete application will NOT be accepted. Skills, testing maybe required. Salaries will commensurate to experience and qualifications. Closing date will be on March 04, 2016.
APEX BUILDERS, INC. is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB16-OVR-060

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: MARCH 21, 2016 **TIME: 10:30 A.M.**

"PURCHASE OF QUICKIE S-636 POWER WHEELCHAIR, A PROJECT UNDER THE OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENSION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTERET OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ARLENE KAY A. YAMAGATA, M.S. CRC
DIRECTOR OF OVR

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB16-OVR-059

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: MARCH 21, 2016 **TIME: 10:00 A.M**

"GROUND MAINTENANCE SERVICES FOR OVR BUILDINGS N-2 & N-4 FOR THE OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENSION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTERET OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ARLENE KAY A. YAMAGATA, M.S. CRC
DIRECTOR OF OVR

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

Saipan Mayor's Office to assist DPW on road projects

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan Mayor's Office will be assisting the Department of Public Works with several road projects, especially secondary lanes and the road going up to Mt. Tapochao, according to Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang.

Apatang said they are now prioritizing in helping DPW with road repairs, especially now that they are about to finish picking up debris left by Typhoon Soudelor in August last year.

The SMO and the Commonwealth Advocates for Recovery Efforts have been cleaning up villages on Saipan every Saturday. They just finished Chinatown and Garapan and will now move to the Tanapag, San Roque, and As Matuis areas.

"We're going to pave the road leading up to Mt. Tapochao as people are expected to go up again in time for the Lenten season," said Apatang, who threw the ceremonial pitch in last Saturday's opening of the Saipan Little League at the Francisco M. "Tan Ko" Palacios baseball field.

Catholic faithful will be making the annual pilgrimage up to Mt. Tapochao starting on the night of March 24, Maundy Thursday, and more will be joining on Friday morning after the procession of the wooden cross from Mt. Carmel Cathedral to the summit of Saipan's highest peak.

Opening up Naftan Road and the road leading to Obyan Beach and Old Man By The Sea will be next as soon as the Saipan Mayor's Office acquires the necessary permits from Division of Environmental Quality, the Division of Coastal Resources Management, and the Division of Fish and Wildlife.

Obyan Road is set to open once the World War II ammunition found by SMO personnel is properly disposed off.

The SMO is also set to receive money from the Federal Emergency Management Agency as reimbursement for what they spent in removing typhoon-related debris in the villages and a separate amount that would be used to build a new animal shelter in Lower Base.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Secretary of Public Works
2nd Floor Joeten Commercial Building, Oleai, Saipan, MP 96950

INVITATION FOR BIDS
DPW-16-IFB-004

Renovation of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation Community Guidance Center Main Office Building

Governor Ralph Dlg. Torres and Lt. Governor Victor B. Hocog, through the Department of Public Works (DPW) are soliciting sealed bids for **the Renovation of the CHCC Community Guidance Center Main Office Building,** Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project package will be available on or after **February 24, 2016** at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan.

All interested bidders are also required to include Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC can be obtained at the Department of Commerce/Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, dated May 24, 2001.

There will be a Pre-bid Conference for this project on **March 11, 2016, 9:00 a.m. local time** at the Department of Public Works Conference Room 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **March 15, 2016** to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

Prospective bidders should examine and review the invitation for bids with care. If it should appear to a prospective bidder that the performance of the work under the contract or any of the matters relative thereto is not sufficiently described or explained in the invitation for bids, or that any discrepancy exists between different parts of the invitation for bids, or that full intent of the invitation for bids is not clear, then the prospective bidder shall submit a written request for clarification no later than ten (10) working days before the scheduled bid opening at 4:30 pm to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547.

The prospective bidder shall examine carefully the site of the proposed work and the invitation for bids before submitting a bid.

The Contracting Officer (CO) may, upon recommendation of the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR), issue an addendum notifying all prospective bidders known to have received an invitation for bids, or if issued after the deadline for submission of the notice of intention to bid, to those persons who submitted such notice, of any changes to the invitation for bids. The Department of Public Works will make every reasonable attempt to notify all persons who obtained the invitation for bids from the Technical Services Division by telephone to pick up the addendum or if the CO chooses, the addendum may be mailed or delivered personally or by facsimile machine. If the bid proposal requires the acknowledgment of addenda, the prospective bidder shall indicate the date of each addendum in the space provided. **It shall be the prospective bidder's responsibility to confirm the existence of any addendum by telephoning the COTR at (670) 234-9828/9838 no later than ten (10) working days before the scheduled bid opening.**

Sealed bids must be marked **"DPW-16-IFB-004"**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascencion Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan, no later than **10:00 a.m. local time, March 29, 2016**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional Seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **10:00 a.m. local time, March 29, 2016**, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **March 29, 2016** and the BID documents must be received at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **April 06, 2016**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascencion Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan, at **10:00 a.m. local time, April 08, 2016.** However, if no notices of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at **10:30 a.m. local time, on March 29, 2016**.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars **($25,000.00)** a bid security of fifteen (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. **Bid security shall be on a bid bond, in cash, by certified check, cashiers check or other form acceptable to the government. A surety company shall hold the certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety requiring approval of the Attorney General must be pre-approved prior to bid submission.** Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations **§70-30.3-245**. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than $25,000.00. Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected contractor shall submit:

a) A current license from the bonding company showing that it has authority to issue bond in the CNMI, and
b) A certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments on other bond obligations) exceed the penal amount of each bond.

A contractor submitting an unacceptable payment or performance bond may be permitted a reasonable time, as determined by the P&S Director, to substitute an acceptable bond prior to executing a contract.

Acceptable assets are only:

1) Cash
2) US Gov't Securities
3) Stocks and Bonds traded on US Security Exchange
4) Real Property owned in fee simple in US; and
5) Irrevocable Letters of Credit

Performance time for completion of this project is **Sixty (60) calendar days** upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages for delays beyond the established completion date will be assessed at the rate of **One Hundred Fifty (US$150.00)** for each and every day the work is delayed beyond the established completion date.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not effect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

/s/ JAMES A. ADA
Secretary of Public Works

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director of Procurement & Supply

/s/ ESTHER L. MUNA
Chief Executive Officer, CHCC

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Procurement and Supply

SPECIAL NOTICE

General Contractors, Suppliers, and Interested Firms

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is inviting general contractors, suppliers, and interested firms to attend an informational conference pertaining to USEPA Grant Funded Water & Wastewater projects that CUC will procure in this fiscal year. Overall, these projects include construction work, repair work, and supply of goods and equipment on Rota, Saipan, and Tinian.

Proposed Projects for Fiscal Year 2016 (Saipan, Tinian & Rota):

- Renovation of Wastewater Lift Station SR1
- Rota Water System Improvement
- Renovation of Wastewater Lift Stations S6 & S10
- Upgraded Pump Controls for Wastewater Lift Station S3
- Tinian Water System Improvements
- Sewer Service Lines
- Improvements to the Kagman Water System
- Water Main Replacement in Capitol Hill
- Water Main Replacement in As Lito
- Replacement of the NMC Water Reservoir
- Water Main Replacement in Gualo Rai
- Repair of Stand by Generators
- Water Main Replacement-Herman's Bakery
- Water Main Replacement in Chalan Kiya
- Water Main Extension on Sailing Drive
- Design and Construction of Improvements to the Maui Well Shafts

Conference Information:

Place : CUC Conference Room
3rd Floor, Room 15, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building
Dandan, Saipan, MP 96950
Date : March 3, 2016
Time : 10:00 a.m. ChST
Contact : Manny B. Sablan, Purchasing Officer,
e-mail address: manny.sablan@cucgov.org
John Riegel, Senior Engineer, e-mail address: john.riegel@cucgov.org

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-16-005

WATER MAIN EXTENSION PROJECT, SAILING DRIVE, DANDAN (W12-022D)

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Construction of Water Main Extension Project in Dandan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The scope of work consists of the installation of approximately 940 LF of new 8-inch PVC water line, along with approximately 500 LF of new 2" PVC water line. It will also involve the reconnection of new and existing customers onto the new waterlines within the project area.

This project is funded by a grant from the United Sates of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from USEPA.

CUC requires the Project to be completed in **75 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a Site Visit is scheduled on **March 1, 2016 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-16-005, Water Main Extension Project, Sailing Drive, Dandan** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on March 18, 2016,** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A *Bid Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. *A Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on March 3, 2016** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer, via email – manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to John Riegel, CUC Water/Wastewater Chief Engineer – via email john.riegel@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY CAMACHO
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

‘Companies should consider offering 401(k) benefits to employees’

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Only a handful of private companies on Saipan are currently offering the 401(k) retirement plan as a benefit to their employees.

According to Gabrielle Bamba of ASC Trust Corp., the bigger companies on Saipan, especially those who have affiliates or branches in Guam, are most often those that offer 401(k) benefits to their employees.

Speaking at the Society for Human Resource Management NMI Chapter monthly general membership meeting last Feb. 25, Bamba said companies should consider offering the benefit to their employees not only because it helps them and gives them an avenue to save for retirement, but also because it has benefits for the companies as well.

“The amounts that the company puts into the plan for their employees, they can take tax redemption on it. There’s a tax saving for the company. It’s an employee benefit. Employees like benefits and if they are able to do that to their list of benefits, as well as the company knowing that they’re helping their employees save for retirement then I think it’s a win-win situation,” Bamba said.

She added that the benefit helps companies attract and retain employees, especially on Saipan where the labor force is limited and in demand.

“It might be that one thing that’s going to encourage an employee to pick one over the other because one has more benefits than the other, and one has better benefits than the other,” Bamba said.

However, Bamba also pointed out that signing up for the plan is ultimately a decision of the employee.

“The employee always has the ability to opt out even if the employee has an automatic enrolment provision,” Bamba said.

Bamba said funds entered into the retirement account is a not easily accessible and can only be taken out through limited reasons such as actual retirement, if they qualify for hardship, and if they qualify for loans.

“The one thing we’d like to remind employees is that your retirement account in the 401(k) plan is not a savings account,” Bamba said.

Bamba also provided an introduction to the 401(k) programs, eligibility and enrollment, investments and returns, tax advantages, among others.

Bamba said part-timers can avail of the plan if they are at least 21 years old and render not less than 1,000 hours a year.

She also clarified that although 401(k) is employer-sponsored, companies doesn’t have to “match” the contribution of its employees.

“It’s a big misnomer that a company has to ‘match.’ When you have a retirement plan with 401(k), the company doesn’t have to make contributions to the plan. Of course it’s good that they do... but employers don’t have to make a matching contribution,” Bamba said.

FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
Gabrielle Bamba of ASC Trust Corp., third from right, sheds light on the 401(k) retirement plan during the Society for Human Resource Management NMI Chapter meeting last Thursday. Bamba said the bigger companies on Saipan are most often those that offer these benefits to employees. She is joined in the photo by SHRM officers.

On Saipan, Bamba also pointed out that it’s better to choose the “Roth” plan for 401(k).

“Basically because of the tax structure here on Saipan, the employee should be contributing on an after-tax basis. With the traditional pre-tax plan is they’re making their payment into the 401k and its reducing their taxables because what goes into the accounts, it’s tax-deferred,” Bamba said.

“With the Roth, they’re paying the taxes on it today. They’re not going to pay the taxes on it in the future. It’s really because if the employees leave later, or if Saipan increases its tax rates,” she added.

For employers, Bamba also discussed the types of services available from providers like their company, which are bundled, unbundled, and alliance.

The bundled service will provide employers all the investment, recordkeeping, administration, education, and services; however it is limited and investment offerings are restricted to funds offered by the vendor.

The unbundled service gives employers diverse options in services especially in investments but maybe more expensive to the employees.

An alliance model, on the other hand, combines the features of both bundled and unbundled and provides “cost-effective, best in class” service.

Ruptured main causes temporary service interruption

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers in Chalan Laulau, Beach Road, and Middle Road are experiencing a temporary water service interruption resulting from a ruptured l6-inch water main below As Terlaje Hill on Chalan Monsignor Guerrero.

CUC Water Personnel discovered the line break when water began to seep out of the pavement along the innermost eastbound lane just below As Terlaje Hill. Both of the eastbound lanes are currently closed to traffic as crews excavate the site. For the safety of our men and women working at the site, motorists are urged to slow down when traveling through the area.

Repairs are anticipated to be completed by Thursday, March 3, 2016, and customers in the affected area should expect restoration of services.

CUC customers in the village of Gualo Rai, meanwhile, will also experience a temporary water service interruption on Thursday, March 3, from 8am to 5pm, as USA Fanter installs new pipes on the Gualo Rai Tank replacement project.

Water service hours will return back to regular service hours on Friday, March 4,2016. Updates will follow as soon as they are available.

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates (https://www.facebook.com,/CommonwealthUtilities-Coporation/). **(PR)**

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS’ HEADLINES

March 2, 2000

Age limit for purchase of tobacco not a deterrent

Increasing the age limit of persons who can avail of tobacco products in the CNMI from 18-21 will not help curb its use in the community, said Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez. While the Department of Public Health welcomes legislation that will reduce the use of tobacco products in the community, Mr. Villagomez said it is important that such a law is practical and enforceable. During Tuesday’s public hearing at the House Committee on Health and Welfare, Mr. Villagomez urged Rep. Maria Peter not to pass House Bill 12-008 which further restricts the sale and increases penalties on the provisions of use and purchase of tobacco products by minors as well as raising the purchase age from 18 to 21.

Gov’t eyes fishing and farming coop

The CNMI government is eyeing the possibility of establishing a fishing and farming cooperative, a move seen to revitalize the islands’ agriculture sector amid dramatic slowdown in garment manufacturing and tourism industries. The plan is part of the government’s intensified efforts to minimize the Commonwealth economy’s heavy reliance on only two major business activities, which are both vulnerable to impacts from external forces. The cooperative is expected to alleviate the difficulties faced by local farmers and fishers in marketing their daily harvest and catch. It will also allow easy access by CNMI consumers to fresh agricultural produce. The Department of Commerce has been asked to study the feasibility of establishing an agriculture cooperative, including the costs and benefits such a program entail.

March 2, 2001

$100K to fund tourism promotions in Taiwan

The CNMI government is bent at releasing $100,000 to finance additional promotional activities that would establish Saipan as a prime tour destination among Taiwanese travelers. Ports Authority Executive Director Carlos H. Salas disclosed Mandarin Air had specifically asked for government support in increased promotion of the CNMI in Taiwan to justify direct flights between Saipan and Taipei. Last month, Mandarin Air disclosed it is looking at suspending nonstop flights between Taipei and Saipan due to declining passenger haul in the absence of effective promotional programs.

NMC reaches out to community

Some 23 representatives from various sectors in the community trooped to the Northern Marianas College’s Focus Group Session yesterday to air suggestions on how the institution can keep its training courses and programs competitive to the needs of a growing and diversified island community. The purpose of the discussion held at the Pacific Gardenia was to obtain community feedback from major employment sectors on how NMC can improve its programs, courses, technical assistance, research studies, and other services to enhance the workforce skills of home-grown workers. According to the expert, the focus group session is a good start of hopefully a series of continued open communication with the business and government sectors towards the enhancement of the local labor force.

March 2, 2005

Customs seizes $100K worth of fake products

Law enforcers seized over $100,000-worth of counterfeit merchandise from several persons and companies, including three who are now facing criminal charges at the Superior Court. The counterfeit merchandise bore popular brand names such as Hérmes, Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Polo, Gucci, Christian Dior, Lacoste, Burberry, Benetton, Calvin Klein, Walt Disney, and Nike. The items included shirts, shoes, bags, wallets and purses, among others. They also include pirated DVDs. The seizure of fake items came about following last year’s enactment of Public Law 14-22, or the Private Labels Protection Act, which criminalized the transporting and selling of counterfeit goods. The law provides a penalty of up to 15 years imprisonment for violators.

Covenant should have addressed submerged lands issue

The ownership of submerged lands in the CNMI should have been addressed specifically in the 1976 Covenant to avoid any legal tussle with the federal government—as what is happening now, said House minority bloc congressman Ramon Tebuteb yesterday. The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals rejected last week the CNMI’s appeal against the U.S. District Court decision declaring that all submerged lands in the Northern Marianas belong the federal government. Tebuteb said that other than the judicial process, “it’s a matter for elected leaders to pursue this matter.” He said the government can still hope for a favorable action through the Section 902 negotiations, during which the CNMI and U.S. government representatives sit down to discuss any concerns relating to the Covenant.

Oguma youngest to earn top insurance designation

HÅGATÑA, Guam— Guåhan Insurance Services, Inc. is proud to announce that assistant general manager Yuka Oguma has recently earned the prestigious Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter (CPCU) insurance designation and as well as the Associate in Insurance Services (AIS) designation from The Institutes, the continuing educational provider of the American Institute for Chartered Property Casualty Underwriters (AICPCU).

The American Institute for CPCU is an independent, nonprofit educational organization that oversees the CPCU designation for completion of eight rigorous courses and national examinations for meeting special ethics and experience requirements.

Oguma is the sixth person and youngest on Guam to receive the top professional designation. Brent Butler, president of Guåhan Insurance Services, Inc. said, "We are very proud of Yuka's recent achievements. She worked diligently to complete her courses and exams to become one of the few and youngest on island to earn these distinctions. These designations ensure that our company continues to provide the highest quality of service to our clients. Yuka's expertise will be an incredible asset to our clients."

Guåhan Insurance Services, Inc., located in the island's capital, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Nanbo Guam Ltd. and is the general agent for Sompo Japan Nipponkoa Insurance Inc., Japan's largest property and casualty insurance company with an A+ (superior) rating from A.M. Best. Guåhan Insurance Services, Inc. offers Home, Auto and Business Insurance. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Assistant general manager Yuka Oguma poses in front of Guåhan Insurance Services, Inc.

Coral Reef Initiative offers summer internships

The CNMI Coral Reef Initiative is looking for 10 CNMI-based college students, or college-bound high school graduates with an interest in learning more about coral reef resource management. The summer interns work 20 hours a week between June and August (dates to be determined) and are paid $8 per hour. This summer's internship opportunities will include:

- Coral Reef and Sea Grass Monitoring
- Sea Turtle Monitoring
- Community Education and Outreach
- Fisheries Research
- Enforcement
- Marine Protected Area Management and Outreach

To be considered, please submit all of the following documents:

- CNMI Employment Application – can be found at: http://www.cnmiopm.net/resources/files/Employee%20Application.pdf
- Cover Letter
- Resume/CV
- Transcripts (unofficial transcripts are ACCEPTABLE)
- Two Letters of Recommendation (instructors and/or employers only)
- Police Clearance (within the LAST 3 MONTHS)
- Copy of Photo ID (driver's license, passport, etc.)

The deadline to submit your application materials is March 31, 2016.

All materials should be scanned and emailed to Avra Heller at avrahellerdeq@gmail.com. If you have questions or concerns about this application please email Ms. Heller, or you can call her at 664-8500. ***(PR)***

HANMI DONATIONS

CONTIBUTED PHOTO

Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands chair Gloria Cavanagh, center, presents a $1,000 donation to Marianas Tourism Education Council chair Vicky Benavente last Jan. 29 at the Saipan World Resort. Pictured from left are PIC Saipan GM Hiroki Sugie, HANMI legal counsel Marcia Schultz, HANMI treasurer Mike Johnson, Benavente, Saipan World Resort GM Hyung Cho Kim, Cavanagh, Coral Ocean Golf Resort GM Myung Wook Park, Kanoa Resort Saipan GM Wendi Herring, Fiesta Resort & Spa GM Abner Acosta, and Grandvrio Resort Saipan GM Akira Takaoka.

CONTIBUTED PHOTO

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands donated $1,000 to the Saipan Senior Advisory Council to assist with council activities serving the *man'amko*. Pictured from left on Feb. 23, 2016, at the Office on Aging office are Fiesta Resort & Spa GM and HANMI board member Abner Acosta, PIC Saipan GM and HANMI secretary Hiroki Sugie, Mariana Resort & Spa GM and HANMI chair Gloria Cavanagh, Saipan Senior Advisory Council president Joaquina Mendiola, and Office on Aging director Walter Manglona.

Comment period ongoing for proposed projects at AAFB

NIMITZ HILL, Guam— Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Marianas announced today the start of a 45-day public comment period for new information associated with proposed projects at Andersen Air Force Base (AAFB) North Field, Guam in support of the Marine Corps Realignment. The comment period for both projects will remain open through April 13, 2016 (Chamorro Standard Time).

Comments are being accepted for the Department of Defense's (DoD) identification of historic properties, determination of eligibility and determination of effect for the following two projects located at North Ramp. P-250: Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron (MALS) (PA Memo #1) and for P-260: Corrosion Control Hangar (PA Memo #1).

P-250 consists of constructing a series of low-rise facilities to support MALS. It will include administrative offices, airframes shop, engine maintenance, avionics maintenance shops, van pads and a general purpose warehouse.

P-260 consists of constructing a corrosion control hangar including a clean and dirty bay to support operational, maintenance, administrative, and support facilities for the USMC Aviation Combat Element (ACE) and the 1st Marine Air Wing (MAW) Element.

Information regarding the proposed projects is available to the public for a 45-day public comment period. The information can be found on the NAVFAC Pacific Cultural Information (CRI) website at http://go.usa.gov/kZWG. (Please note the URL is case sensitive). Comments may be submitted via email to criwebcomment@navy.mil.

Those without internet access can obtain a hard copy of the PA Memos from the Guam Historic Resources Division, located at 490 Chalan Palasyo, Agana Heights, 96910 (in the Department of Parks and Recreation Office). ***(PR)***

Jehovah's Witnesses holds Circuit Assembly this Sunday

The three local congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses warmly invites you to attend a one-day Circuit Assembly on Sunday, March 6, 2016 at the Taga Hall of the Saipan World Resort. The theme of the Assembly is "Imitate Jehovah!" based on Ephesians 5:1.

The assembly program will show how to discern God's qualities in various Bible accounts and how to apply them. All of us should reflect on how holy, just, wise, loyal, courageous, impartial and forgiving Jehovah God is. Doing so will deepen our appreciation for him, moving us to imitate his qualities to the full.

At 1:30pm there will also be a Public Discourse entitled, "How Does God Feel About Religion?" There are millions of people who accept the existence of God but feel uneasy about the tension associated with the world's religions. This talk will highlight that Jehovah God is pleased with deeds of true devotion which reflect appreciation for his personality and ways.

Please note that program will start at 9:30am on Sunday, March 6. Additionally, the entire program will be presented in English and American Sign Language. There is no admission charge and no collections are taken. ***(PR)***

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Not-so-Super Tuesday

Being given the opportunity to disavow David Duke, the Ku Klux Klan and the white supremacist movement isn't a setup or a trick question. Even racists know better than to engage in their racism before a national audience. Yet on CNN on Sunday, Donald Trump denied common sense on a biblical scale—three times he declined to criticize Duke and his ilk for supporting him. And yet that awful moment, which encapsulates so much of what is going wrong in the Republican primary, may prove irrelevant as Super Tuesday voters look to push him far ahead in the delegate count.

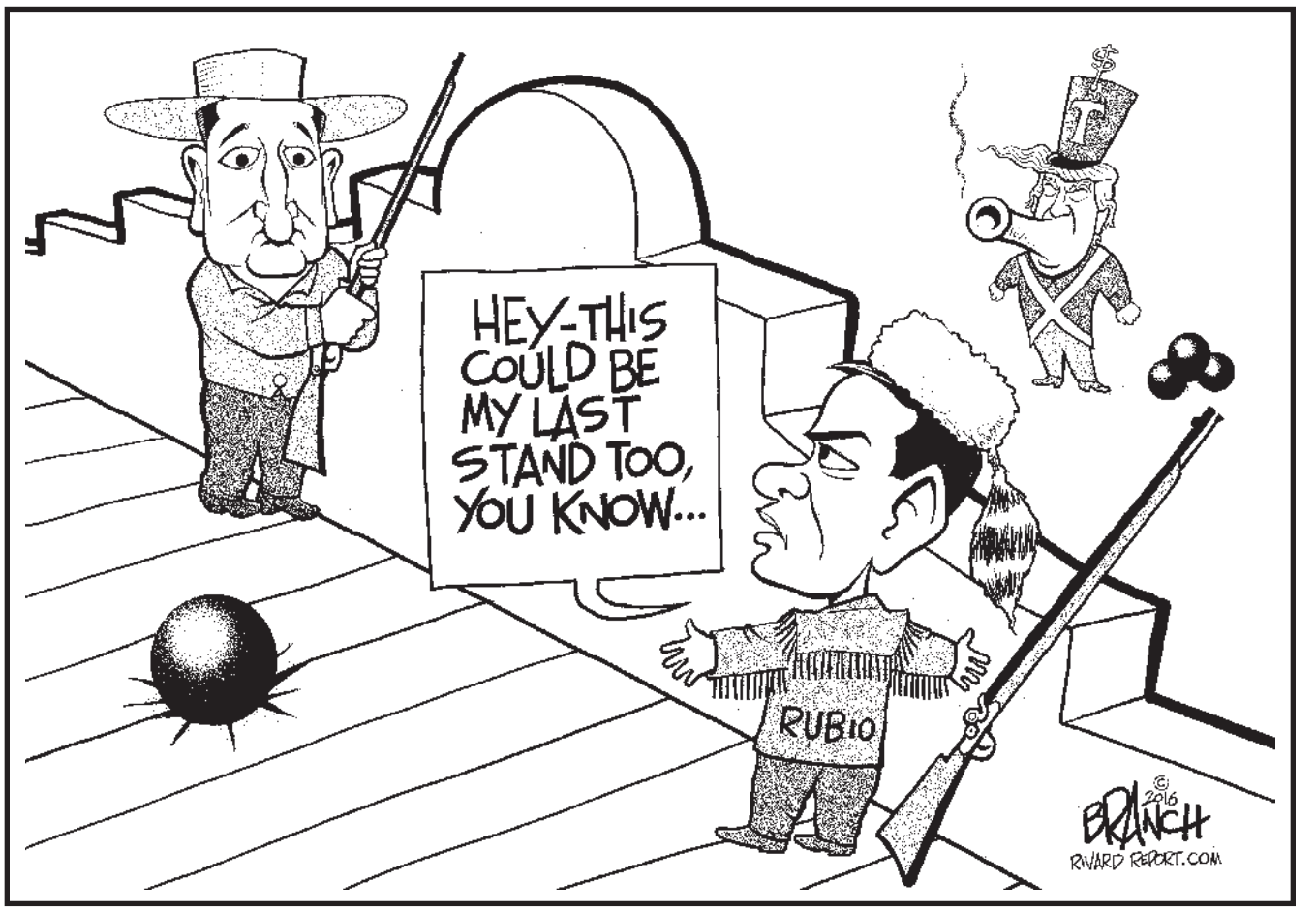
Trump can try to rewrite that moment in history all he wants. His latest claim that it was due to a poor earpiece and that he didn't know what groups were being discussed doesn't wash _ not when he used the name "David Duke" and the term "white supremacists" in his reply. This wasn't some little-known backroom racist, this was the former Louisiana state representative who famously supports racial segregation and rails against Jews for controlling Hollywood and the banking system. And, by the way, what curious timing to refuse to disavow the former KKK leader when important southern primaries loom.

So what does all of that mean for Super Tuesday? The latest national poll numbers released on Monday suggest Trump is leading the GOP field with 49 percent of the vote, or 30 points above his nearest competitor, Sen. Marco Rubio. Trump could easily end up winning in Alaska, Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Vermont and Virginia. Only Texas, the home state of Sen. Ted Cruz, may go against him, and even that outcome is far from certain. Trump is surely not going to end the day with all 595 Republican delegates that are up for grabs, but he could wind up with a near-insurmountable lead.

The idea of a brokered convention? That looks increasingly unrealistic. As the GOP field has winnowed, Trump's lead has grown, not diminished. Soon, the billionaire is likely to pass the 50 percent barrier, and by then no attacks on his tax returns, his character, his hiring of illegal laborers or, yes, even his refusal to disavow the nation's best-known racist are going to stop this political juggernaut. The Party of Lincoln has reaped what it sowed: All these years of anti-government, anti-immigrant, anti-establishment and often hateful, venomous rhetoric and dog whistling attacks on President Barack Obama have produced that strategy's uber-candidate, someone who embraces all of it without the niceties—or even intellectual consistencies.

That Sens. Cruz and Rubio have obviously amped up their attacks on Trump in recent days—descending to Trump's coarse style in some cases—is a classic case of too little, too late. How do you tell voters that building a wall across Mexico goes too far, that experienced politicians can be better trusted or that replacing Obamacare with "more competition" isn't a rational health care strategy when so many on that side of the aisle sound so much like Trump? For every Meg Whitman blasting the

See TUESDAY on Page 11



NAP again

We are into our second month of formal penury so we'll visit NAP tomorrow to pick-up $82 worth of food stamps. I do not know how the office arrived at the figure for a single mouth but it does put green leafy vegetables into my table. I discovered that the green leaf and stalk at the bottom of a cauliflower that I had been throwing away as trash is actually edible. Things one learn when hanging over the bottomless abyss!

There is advantage being over 70 among those that line up at NAP. I waited for a number in the line inside the door when someone noticed my gray hair and asked for my age. She told me to proceed straight to the counter as *man'amko* gets immediate attention. How convenient. I saw why. Most of my age, even younger ones, walked with four-pronged cane, or were pushed on wheel chair. I carried my weight unaided, making me an oddity in the crowd.

The CNMI 2010 census had 43K U.S. citizens and 15K CWs. NAP served almost a million that year. After Typhoon Soudelor, with the weakened state of unemployment, and the longer life expectancy of elders, pick-up days gathered a crowd. True to government tradition, the cost of dispensing food assistance was more than the amount dispensed. Public programs tend to be also employment options, more so in the CNMI where the local government serves as a labor niche for the followers of elected politicians.

NAP is SNAP in Guam and 31 other states. The "S" stands for the supplemental nature of the program, ironically, began as Food Stamps when farm surplus exceeded needs shortly before the U.S. entered World War II. It lasted for four years and stopped when the war effort absorbed labor, making the nation income fed. At the onset, a big gulf separated the two.

JFK's first executive order was for food distribution and on Lyndon Johnson's watch the Food Stamp Act was passed in Congress. LBJ hailed the Act as dealing with agricultural abundance. Few Republicans supported what it derided as dole.

In '74, the Federal Food Stamp Program (FSP) was implemented nationwide, hitched automatically to the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) by public law. At its inception, the FSP required a recipients' purchase as a counter part to the benefit. That provision was nulled in the reform of '77 and in the Welfare Reforms of the '90s, it started using Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT), a specialized debit card system that totally became national in 2008 when the Food Stamp program was renamed SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Got that?

Guam runs its SNAP like the rest of the country's programs; the CNMI opted to run its own version, 30 percent of cost comes from local appropriations. CNMI offers higher benefits than Guam but still uses the paper "currency."

Like most "welfare" programs, the Donkeys (Democrats) initiated SNAP, opposed by Elephants (Republicans). It is therefore no surprise that the Food Stamp impetus was primarily made during Democrat's terms: FDR, Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton, and now, Barack Obama. As a Democrat-leaning denizen, I see the thrust of public assistance as what governments do temporarily to alleviate the needs of citizens in dire need of basic assistance.

It differs from charity work that often inculcates ideology, elements of belief, or even good behavior, or the subtle insinuation of the same. In NAP, the assessment of need is objective with the question of whether one needs it or not, a "Yes or No" proposition, no questions asked.

Because the folks in Sinosphere are high on social face, China's *mienzi*, Japan's *mentsu*, and Korea's *Chemyeon*, they are inhibited from joining the program save maybe one or two Hanguk, but then, South Korea is the informal 51st State of the Union, so familiarity with the practice is no big surprise.

BTW, Korea as a State of the Union is no idle characterization. The top 3 U.S. ground troop deployment without count of dependents are: Japan (48,828), Germany (37,704), and South Korea (27,558). Japan managed to avoid Uncle Sam's gung ho; Americans in Japan outdo the natives in indigene ways. In Germany, well, a lot of America *sprechen sie Deutch*. What can I say? But South Korea of 2016, the reverse is true. Some Koreans now speak impeccable English with liberal use of the "f" word in street discourse.

In Seoul '72, I ate Big Mac with kimchi on the side, compliments of the Double Arches. Korea's unification cannot occur unless the Grunts leave, and that is not going to happen anytime soon.

Pea Eye used to have U.S. military facilities, asked to leave 25 years ago. Now grunts are asked to return, never mind that they really never left; against Abu Sayyaf, hit-and-run operations were incognito around General Santos and Cagayan de Oro.

Democratic 'Pinas is immuned from the preoccupation with *mukha* (face), except the *taas ilong* (uppity Flips), the satisfaction to meet need precedes worry about reputation. NAP's crowd abounds in Pea Eye dialects. And I bring my laptop along. Klass, neh?

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime Vergara previously taught at SVES in the CNMI. A peripatetic pedagogue, he last taught in China but makes Honolulu, Shenyang, and Saipan home. He can be reached at pinoypanda2031@aol.com. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the Saipan Tribune.

Of politics and evil

People from all walks of life have said their piece about politics and the vicious accompanying evil in hardship born by public officials' ineptitude. Even those who supported folks now at the helm speak evil of their choice. Little do they realize that it became a collective evil when they voted for these folks a year or so ago.

Someone related how "we recognize that the main face of evil is corruption." I'm not surprised at the fixation to corruption or the refrain that repeats itself about evil for we only know too well what happened here in recent past or since 1979. The game is limited to politicians and their crony business partners. Fortunately, it begins and ends there too.

The fear of everybody else beneath this social strata or level centers around other things, basically about urgent family needs, foreclosures and homelessness, inability to meet health cost, inadequate, unsteady and stagnant income and the evil of destitution that it brings to families.

It is the powerful and their biz cronies who engage in corruption. It involves money and power the simple folks have very little of both. It's a buy-and-sell deal. "It needs power or positions of power and money or what money can buy. To resolve use of corruption buyers and sellers must be dissuaded or punished with consistency and severity.

Lest we forget, money and power are two faces of the same coin or "sometimes the same two faces on each side." And it stares at your sorrowful face and sticky fingers!

If you will money and power are the two main traits of leadership or more often than not they have been the only traits. "That is why with all the billions of human beings who have walked this earth we cannot fill a few pages with names of leaders who had wisdom aside from wealth and power," writes Inquirer columnist Jose Montelibano. "To expect wisdom from holders of great wealth and power, then, is going against all odds. Once in a while, it happens, but like once in a blue moon."

Here at home we know most politicians aren't rich, but we also know those who have compromised integrity to sell to wealthy donors. I've seen how certain candidates had their expenses paid for by their so-called rich donors. Embarrassing that they don't know that we know why the wide smile on their faces stretching from ear to ear. No worries! We will also show you that there's such a thing as the sunset of your smile into one long frown in sorrowful regret!

Finding the disadvantaged

In case you're suffering from a senior's moment (dementia) may I take the pleasure to give you a run down of folks or disadvantaged you seem to have conveniently skipped in recent past.

These are folks who had to muddle through their day yearning for some semblance of hope that they'd find brighter days ahead. It's the folks who had to juggle the same 20-year salaries that haven't seen any increase since then.

They include food stamp recipients, private sector employees who had to take cuts because the company is hardly making ends meet, those immediately above the threshold of poverty income level who had to weather the wraths of income inadequacies, among others.

At the very core of the staple of negligence you've dished out against thousands of families you probably are quizzing what are you supposed to do to mediate the deepening hardship at home? Didn't you boasts of being the "solutions driven" team?

May we know what specific solutions have you undertaken to assist families meet basic needs? I mean beyond junkets to Fiji, DC and Tobi, name a specific measure so designed by real expert economic planners to improve family income in the near term?

The answer is quite simple: provide the disadvantaged "an equal playing field" and empower them the opportunity to live decently right here at home. Otherwise, they'd be "evacuating" beyond the imaginary borders of the NMI. What would you want them to remember you by in terms of your legacy? Do we settle for negligence or how you've succumbed to donors who have turned you into their lapdogs?

Rota Dialysis: There's pompous and disoriented statements about the Rota Hemodialysis plan as though it's neglected. Not quite and it goes into substantive issues way beyond the shallow politics that grandly fails to address the medical and core issues dealing with Type II diabetes or end stage renal failure.

The facility would be woefully expensive. It would require an emergency room. This component is a must. For instance, when a dialysis patient suffers from a stroke or heart attack, he is rushed to the ER for a revival treatment. It would require a medical expert and his/her team or ER staff. And nearly everyone would have to be hired from without the NMI.

It would also need a nephrologist with an annual salary of not less than $200,000 and at least four dialysis nurses. Both costs are highly prohibitive for CHC to defray. Furthermore, the cost of treatment for dialysis patients is paid for either by Medicaid or Medicare with local participation. This issue is handled by CHC and the hospital can't afford losing either for it is a major source of income for medical and core operations.

A single major issue we've opted to ignore though highly responsible for renal failure is found in our food loaded with tons of salt. The only way out of this mess is to do dietary frontal attack where salt is reduced, including sugar and fatal animal fat. It's in our food. Let's do something about it so we could cancel treatment for politicians suffering from diarrhea of the mouth.

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the* Saipan Tribune*.*

TUESDAY

From Page 10

real estate tycoon as a "dishonest demagogue," there's now a Gov. Chris Christie or Sen. Jeff Sessions rising to his defense. It's beginning to look like in this version of the famous movie, a large chunk of the villagers have actually taken a shine to Frankenstein's monster.

Trump panders to supporters, alienates everyone else

Meanwhile, Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton's big win in South Carolina on Saturday appears to have set her up for a big day on Super Tuesday. Whatever doubts Democrats may harbor about the former first lady—that she isn't an exciting candidate, that she hasn't spurred turnout like Obama did eight years ago, that she doesn't appeal to young voters—seems to be diminishing. Sen. Bernie Sanders isn't going away and will probably do—in Colorado, Massachusetts, Minnesota and Oklahoma, not to mention his home state of Vermont, but lopsided wins by Clinton in southern states are likely to push the delegate count her way—and that's what matters.

Trump shakes up GOP

When the dust settles, Super Tuesday may be remembered as the day the matchup for the general election was set. But it may also be recalled as the day the Republican Party truly lost its way, disconnected not only from the mainstream of American politics but from the decency, morality or at least the caution that once defined the party that freed the slaves.

(c) 2016 The Baltimore Sun

Will Americans fall for 'strongman' Trump?

We've entered an era in which strongmen are in vogue and democracy is taking a hit worldwide.

So it's really depressing in this dismal election season to watch how oblivious the leading GOP candidate is to the threats posed by authoritarian rulers. It's equally depressing to watch the GOP — in the battle over replacing Justice Antonin Scalia — undermine the institutional protections that shield us from this global trend.

In the last, most raucous Republican debate, Donald Trump said the Middle East would be better off "if we had Saddam Hussein and we had (Moammar) Gadhafi in charge" of their countries. He's made clear he'd have no problem with Bashar Assad remaining president of Syria. He's praised Vladimir Putin (who calls Trump "brilliant") and said he'd like to work with the Russian to stabilize the region.

The issue is not whether it would have been better for the United States to stay out of Iraq, or whether we should turn our back on Syria. It's Trump's assumption that dictators are a solution for the Mideast and that an autocrat like Putin is a good partner for the United States.

Such lazy thinking ignores the forces that produced waves of jihadi terrorists in the Arab world — as well as Putin's dangerous ambitions which have fueled the jihadi upsurge.

Moreover, this adulation for the concept of a populist strongman is downright dangerous when applied to the home front.

Dictators are the cause of the current Mideast chaos, not its solution. In their decades of misrule, Saddam, Gadhafi, and to a lesser extent, the Assad family, kept themselves in power via oil revenues and repression. They never built the institutions that could make a state run or create jobs for the huge youth bulge — especially when oil prices plummeted.

Even had the United States stayed out of Iraq, youthful discontent was bound to erupt in the region — as it did during the Arab Spring, which began eight years after the start of the Iraq war. But dictators in Egypt, Libya, and Syria had crushed any viable opposition leadership, as had Saddam before them.

The youthful rebels had no leaders up to the task, nor any institutions to build on. Their rebellions led to chaos, and produced the failed states that became breeding grounds for jihadi movements. But a return to dictatorship — or the retention of Assad — will only set the failed cycle in motion again.

Putin has followed the same destructive course inside Russia. He built his popularity by dispensing oil wealth, while repressing the media along with any opposition, including protests by the urban middle class.

Having failed to build a diversified economy, and with oil prices dropping and financial reserves falling, Putin has to distract his public by foreign adventures in Ukraine and Syria. He cleverly dressed them up with populist, nationalist slogans.

Moreover, the Russian leader is trying to promote his brand of authoritarian rule, dressed up with parliamentary trappings and elections, as an alternative to liberal democracy — with himself as the movement's leader.

By TRUDY RUBIN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the Philadelphia Inquirer. Readers may write to her at: Philadelphia Inquirer, P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by email at trubin@phillynews.com.

In Europe, he funds populist, authoritarian parties in France and Central Europe, and stirs up Russian minorities in the Baltics. He sows dissention inside the European Union by sending Russian and Syrian government planes to target hospitals, schools, and markets in rebel-held areas in Syria, thus driving more refugees to Europe. And — as we pass the two-year anniversary of his invasion of Crimea — he continues to destabilize Ukraine.

Never mind that Putin's dictatorship, like those in the Mideast, is threatening the economic future of his country. For the moment, when the world is going crazy, he poses as a role model whom other populists want to emulate.

Which brings us back to the United States and what distinguishes this country from the failed states of the Mideast and a sinking Russia, a distinction that Trump and GOP leaders fail to appreciate.

Thanks to the founding fathers, this country has institutions — the presidency, Congress, the Supreme Court — that have served as the country's backbone, independent of political changes. It (mostly) has rule of law and a government that provides vital services. In other words, it is not a failed state like Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Libya, or — apart from its oil wealth — Russia.

Yet, in these confusing times, GOP candidates have campaigned as if these institutions and the government itself were the enemy. Republican legislators have dedicated themselves to paralyzing Congress while Obama holds office.

In clear violation of the Constitution and of all precedent, the Republican leadership has ruled out confirmation hearings during Obama's term to fill the court vacancy, thus undermining the institutions of the presidency and the court.

Meantime, Trump plays on public discontent to promote himself as a Putinesque populist who will rule with a firm hand and cure all our ills.

In a world where Putinism is advancing, our (deliberately) paralyzed democracy no longer looks like such an attractive alternative. If politicians insist the state has failed, rather than uniting to solve the country's problems, they may create a self-fulfilling prophecy. They may succeed in convincing many Americans that the country is hopelessly broken.

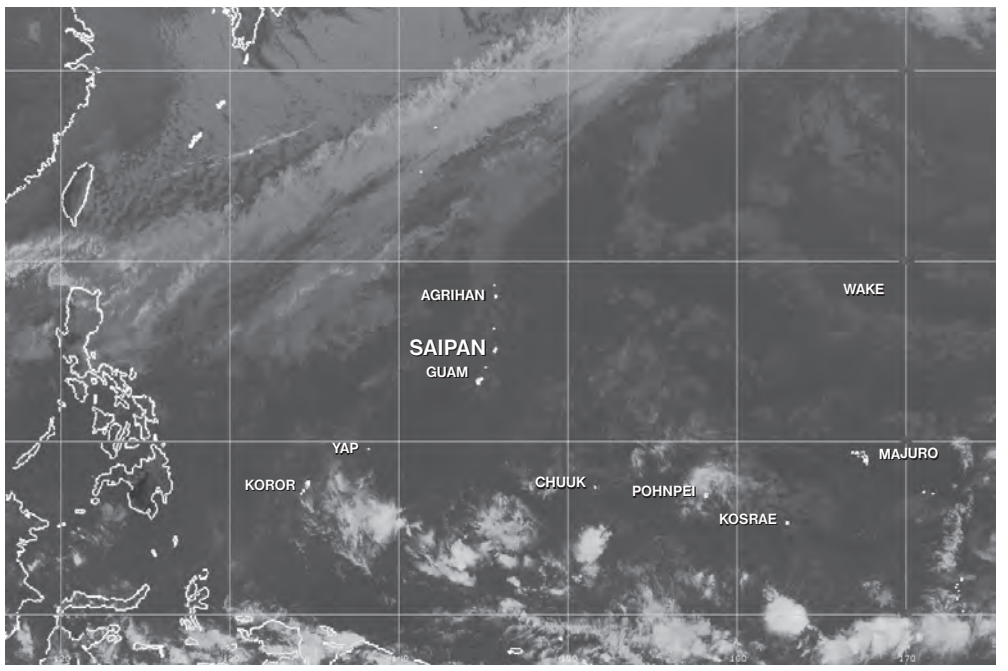
And — although I still doubt this can happen — many Americans might start believing the answer is to choose a self-proclaimed "strong" leader. They would be mistaken, but that realization could come too late.

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 5 to 15 mph.	Mostly sunny with a slight chance of light showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.
▲86º ▼76º	▲87º ▼76º	▲86º ▼75º	▲86º ▼75º	▲86º ▼75º

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 12:49 PM, TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2016
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front heads southwest through 25N147E to 21N140E, then continues as a shear through 130E at 15N. Clouds and showers are seen near IWO to island, along and north of this boundary to beyond 25N. A surface trough stretches northeast from north of Koror at 11N134E to 20N144E. Scattered showers are seen west of the Marianas within 100 miles of a line from 14N133E to 19N140E. A near-equatorial trough extends east-southeast from 4N133E to EQ152E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are present east of Majuro within 175 miles of a line from 7N136E to 2N157E.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia

Guam And Rota	Sunny	▲85	▼74
Palau	Partly Cloudy	▲89	▼75
Yap	Partly Cloudy	▲88	▼75
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	▲87	▼78
Pohnpei	Cloudy	▲86	▼77
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	▲86	▼79
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	▲87	▼78

Around the Globe

Auckland	Sunny	▲72	▼60
Beijing	Sunny	▲65	▼20
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲68	▼40
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲76	▼59
London	Mostly Cloudy	▲54	▼49
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲80	▼47
Manila	Cloudy	▲82	▼71
Melbourne	Sunny	▲89	▼51
Miami	Cloudy	▲78	▼58
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲47	▼25
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲49	▼32
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	▲43	▼40
Pusan	Sunny	▲53	▼26
Rome	Sunny	▲62	▼47
Salem	Cloudy	▲55	▼47
San Francisco	Partly Sunny	▲65	▼50
Seoul	Sunny	▲49	▼32
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲49	▼25
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲60	▼37

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides

Saipan Harbor

2:01 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.4 Feet
7:08 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
12:45 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
8:23 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.3 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:34 AM	6:25 PM
Thursday	6:33 AM	6:25 PM
Friday	6:32 AM	6:25 PM
Saturday	6:32 AM	6:26 PM
Sunday	6:31 AM	6:26 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	12:22 AM	12:06 PM
Thursday	1:13 AM	12:55 PM
Friday	2:04 AM	1:47 PM
Saturday	2:56 AM	2:42 PM
Sunday	3:48 AM	3:39 PM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 1, 2016

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA2924	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA2922	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA2921	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA2920	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA2928	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA2926	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA2921	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA2921	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:20pm	7:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ628	3:50am	7:40am	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:30am	Daily
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	5:30am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA2924/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM
UA2924/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	Daily via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2922/193	8:40am	11:10pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:30pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:50pm	1, 4, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA2921/193	1:30pm	11:10pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA2920/183	2:20pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM
UA2920/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA2920/193	2:20pm	11:10pm	2 via GUM-ROR
UA2928/183	6:05pm	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2928/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2928/193	6:05pm	11:10pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2926/191	9:50pm	7:20am+1	1, 6 via GUM
UA2926/191	9:50pm	9:00am+1	3, 6 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ628/721	3:50am	12:50am	Daily via ICN
UA2922/159	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA2921/159	1:30pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via Rota-GUM
UA2920/159	2:20pm	10:35pm	3, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA2923	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA2925	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA2921	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA2920	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA2927	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA2929	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA2920	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA2920	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:35am	3:10pm	Daily

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
OZ627	9:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily
7C3404	10:10pm	3:30am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA190/2927	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 6, 7 via GUM
UA190/2929	9:55am	9:20pm	2, 6, 7 via GUM
UA190/2927	10:00am	5:35pm	3 via GUM
UA190/2929	10:00am	9:20pm	3 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ702/627	12:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
PR110/UA2925	10:05pm	8:05am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/2925	10:20pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2920	10:20pm	1:50pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2927	10:20pm	5:35pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2929	10:20pm	9:20pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2925	11:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2920	11:59pm	1:50pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	11:59pm	5:35pm+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2929	11:59pm	9:20pm+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ724/627	2:20pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
UA116/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA116/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA116/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
6:30AM	6:45AM	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

Bordallo addresses increases in H-Visa denials

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Congresswoman Madeleine Z. Bordallo wrote to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to express her concerns with reported increased rates of denials that local businesses are encountering when renewing H-visa applications. Congresswoman Bordallo noted that these workers are critical to supporting our health care and construction industries, which require specialized employees that our local workforce is not able to fully provide. She requested that USCIS provide clarification on its denial process as well as fidelity on the rationale behind the increase in H-1 and H-2 visa renewal denials.

"I am concerned that local businesses are seeing an increase in denials for H-visa renewal applications without any clear indication about what has changed since last year. I strongly support local workers having preferences for these jobs, but our current workforce is not able to meet the demand for certain services. The anticipated military construction workload will take our island past its historical levels of organic support and will require H-2B workers. Further, there is a shortage of nurses on Guam that require providers to rely on the H-2B visa program. For these reasons, in 2008 Congress separated Guam and the CNMI's H-2B visa quote from the national quota, which was extended at the end of 2014. Ultimately, these denials could adversely impact our economy, the delivery of health care, and anticipated construction related to the realignment of Marines from Okinawa to Guam. I will work with USCIS to address this problem to ensure that our businesses have an adequate workforce," she said.

Language tilt to celebrate Guam's hosting of FESTPAC

On March 8 and 9, 2016, the Chamorro Studies Program of the University of Guam will hold its annual "Inacha'igen Fino' CHamoru" or Chamorro Language Competition. Each year, hundreds of students from both private and public schools throughout the Marianas gather to compete in categories that test their knowledge of speaking, reading, writing, and singing in the Chamorro language.

The Inacha'igen is free and open to the public. The entire community is invited to come and watch this celebration of the indigenous language of the Marianas Islands and support efforts to preserve it for future generations.

The theme for this year's competition is "I Fino' CHamoru: I Guinahå-ta, Iyo-ta yan Ta Fanana'i" or "The Chamorro Language: Our Abundance, Ours To Share With One Another." This theme draws inspiration from Guam's hosting of the twelfth Festival of Pacific Arts (FESTPAC) in May 2016, with the theme of "Håfa Iyo-ta, Håfa Guinahå-ta, Håfa Ta Påtte, Dinanña' Sunidu Siha Giya Pasifiku," a message of pride in our heritage and commitment to sharing our culture.

The first day of the competition will take place on Tuesday, March 8, from 7am to 3:30pm. at the UOG Calvo Field House. On this day, large group competitions for middle and elementary school will be held, as well as group and individual categories for high school level participants. On Tuesday, students will compete in the following categories: elementary school children's choir; high school proficiency; dramatic cultural interpretation; song with dance and male and female singing; and middle school chant and choral reading.

On the second day, Wednesday, March 9, the competition will be held in the UOG CLASS Lecture Hall from 2pm to 7:30pm and feature individual categories for middle and elementary schools. On Wednesday, the following categories will be featured: elementary school spelling and storytelling; and middle and high school oratorical and poetry recitation. Each competitive event will be judged by members of the community who are fluent in the Chamorro language. For each category, gold, silver, and bronze medals will be awarded for first, second, and third place finishers.

In addition to this, two categories have been designed in order to help build community excitement with FESTPAC in mind. For the dramatic interpretation, where high school groups perform a play in the Chamorro language, they are encouraged to use the FESTPAC/Inacha'igen themes to demonstrate some important aspect of Chamorro history or culture. For the children's choir category, where elementary schools compete against each other to see who can perform best a shared song, we have chosen the official theme song for FESTPAC, titled "FESTPAC 2016," written by Peter Onedera, for this category. On Tuesday, March 8, hundreds of students from throughout the Marianas will be joining together to sing this song of Pacific unity and cultural pride.

The Inacha'igen Fino' CHamoru is made possible because of generous sponsors including the UOG Office of the Dean of College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, the Guam Visitors Bureau, and Coast 360. The organizing committee for this year's competition includes the following Chamorro Studies and Chamorro language faculty from the University of Guam: Siñot Joseph Franquez (co-chair) and Dr. Michael Lujan Bevacqua (co-chair), Siñora Rosa Salas Palomo, Siñora Ruth Mendiola, Siñora Teresita Flores, and Dr. James Viernes. ***(PR)***

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CNMI version of democracy not mature enough

Readers may have missed my points in my letter published on Feb. 25, 2016 in your paper titled "AG's Opinion Needed."

I referred to the concept of "separation of powers" and "conflict of interest" between the Legislative Branch and Executive Branch of the CNMI government as issues that are real, usual, and customary as is in any constitutional government jurisdiction in the U.S. system of democracy. I also pointed that the CNMI government is a unique governing jurisdiction within the entire U.S. system of democracy that wrong its people when its elected AG failed to follow constitutional and lawful course of action advise that violated of its own constitution. Hence, the CNMI government is a special breed of democracy. In retrospect, our elected representatives of the Legislative Branch and Executive Branch are all part of the problem for their failure to stop the perpetuation of an unconstitutional and unlawful action permitting a person to hold elected office in violation of the CNMI Constitution.

Every elected member of the legislative, executive, and including the attorney general takes an oath to uphold the CNMI Constitution. The whole thing, not just parts they like.

Article XVII, Section 1 of the CNMI Constitution, reads specifically in part established what the oath or affirmation of office that follows: "I do solemnly affirm (or swear) that I will support and defend the Constitutions and laws of the CNMI, the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America, the applicable provisions of the Constitution, laws and treaties of the United States of America, and that I will faithfully discharge my duties to the best of my ability (so help me God)." Honesty and trustworthy are symbolized by placing the left hand of the person on a Bible and the right hand raised just about to the heart level. All these ceremonial requirements are part of the CNMI Constitution, but ignoring what it stands for as our desired way of keeping the CNMI civilized society in order takes an irreparable harm when our elected officials blindly set it aside. There I pointed that our brand of democracy may be so unique that we do not fit the level of maturity in constitutional democracy paring ours to that of the U.S. system of democracy.

Article II, Section 11 of the CNMI Constitution, prohibits an elected official of the Legislature to serve in any employment capacity in the Executive Branch. Likewise, Article III, Section 6, prohibits the governor or lieutenant governor to hold office in the Legislative Branch or any other position. Ignoring these constitutional prohibitions because of failure of the elected AG to intervene or cause the stoppage of the unlawful and unconstitutional course of action is a serious concern. And, the continued lack of action that sanctioning this malady in our constitutional order is a targeted retardation of our maturity to good democracy. The comparative advantage following the learned successful progress of governmental jurisdictions in the U.S. that have dealt with this type of issues longer and consistently acceptable than us is not a shameful practice if we want consistency and continuity in our system of governance.

Certainly, our constitutional construct has its own idiosyncrasy and only good for our purpose and approach of governing. In the case on the issue of Article III, Section 7 of the CNMI Constitution, the CNMI is not alone in this critical constitutional impasse, but as in New Jersey, where in its constitution states that if the governor dies/resigns occurs less than 16 months before end of the term, the state holds a special election to elect the governor. This part of their constitutional mandate could not have been ignored by their elected AG. However, what our elected AG found has it wrong and allowed by his own opinion and legal advise that any part of Article III, Section 7, could be ignored and set aside. This is what I was referring to as the uniqueness of constitutional democracy practiced in and with our elected AG. The problem here is wedged between the elected AG and elected representative of the Legislature. This travesty in our history should give future generation the caveat that it is better to suffer the truth than prosper by falsehood.

Our elected AG, elected representatives of the our Legislature, and elected governor's office could not have done better because when the truth stands in their own ways, that should prompt it's time to change direction, but to them that seems too difficult to articulate. Actually, imprudence is often the result of ignorance. It is their turn to explain themselves to this awkward and unprecedented turn of events in our young democracy. The unexpressed indecision of the elected representative of our Legislature on the issue is the graveyard of good intentions.

Francisco R. Agulto
Kanat Tabla

The vulnerable state of the Marianas

The National Interest magazine published a Feb. 26, 2016 article "Revealed: America's Backup Plan in Case of War with China" which talks about the Chinese and U.S. militaries, but fails to provide enough information to readers about the Chamorro and Chamolinian people of the Marianas Islands.

The author, Robert Beckhusen, makes the point that the Chinese have a ballistic missile, the DF-26, that is capable of striking both Kadena Air Base and Andersen Air Force Base. This claim, if true, makes Andersen Air Force Base in Guam a more attractive target for the Chinese military as Andersen has the largest fuel storage capacity of any Air Force base overseas, is now co-locating elements of Marine Corps aviation and is home to ISR resources and support.

The problem with Beckhusen's article is that it places too much focus on military matters alone and does not provide enough information to better gauge the overall feelings and sentiments of the people of Tinian on matters of a military transformation. Beckhusan fails in his article to acknowledge the Chamorro and Chamolinian people of both Saipan and Tinian, he fails to include information on Marine Corps desires for unit training on Tinian and he fails to state that the Chamorro people of the Marianas are patriotic Americans who cannot vote for the President of the United States, and have only one non-voting delegate in Congress. Beckhusan also fails to state in his article that the people of the Mariana Islands are both physically isolated and highly vulnerable to the damage and destruction and harm that additional military operational training will have on the total island environment, the total island ecosystem and on the Chamorro culture and social fabric.

Instead, Beckhusan, quotes a member of the RAND Corporation referencing the Air Force's desire to create redundant operating facilities throughout the Pacific, which is intended to create complexity for the Chinese military targeting community seeking to destroy American military airfields and assets. The problem with Beckhusan's article is he omits to state that if the Marianas Islands were to be attacked, the Air Force might have options to "divert," but the residents from San Jose village in Tinian will not, nor will villagers from Saipan, Luta, or Guam.

Maybe the next time Beckhusan decides to write an article in *The National Interest* magazine about the Chinese and American militaries and the Marianas Islands, he will consider placing substantially more emphasis and focus on the Chamorro and Chamolinian people of the Marianas Islands and how they are increasingly vulnerable to the potential expanded presence of the U.S. military and the attendant dangers associated with military training.

Rick Perez
Via email

Business

NY judge: US cannot make Apple provide iPhone data

NEW YORK (AP)—A federal judge ruled Monday that the U.S. Justice Department cannot use a 227-year-old law to force Apple to provide the FBI with access to locked iPhone data, dealing a blow to the government in its battle with the company over privacy and public safety.

The ruling, by U.S. Magistrate Judge James Orenstein, applied narrowly to one Brooklyn drug case, but it gives support to the company's position in its fight against a California judge's order that it create specialized software to help the FBI hack into an iPhone linked to the San Bernardino terrorism investigation.

Both cases hinge partly on whether a law written long before the computer age, the 1789 All Writs Act, could be used to compel Apple to cooperate with efforts to retrieve data from encrypted phones.

"Ultimately, the question to be answered in this matter, and in others like it across the country, is not whether the government should be able to force Apple to help it unlock a specific device; it is instead whether the All Writs Act resolves that issue and many others like it yet to come," Orenstein wrote. "I conclude that it does not."

AP

In this Sept. 9, 2014, file photo, Apple CEO Tim Cook speaks during an announcement of new products in Cupertino, Calif.

Apple's opposition to the government's tactics has evoked a national debate over digital privacy rights and national security. On Thursday, the Cupertino, California-based company formally objected to the order in a brief filed with the court, accusing the federal government of seeking "dangerous power" through the courts and of trampling on the company's constitutional rights.

The separate California case involves an iPhone 5C owned by San Bernardino County and used by Syed Farook, who was a health inspector. He and his wife Tashfeen Malik killed 14 people during a Dec. 2 attack that was at least partly inspired by the Islamic State group. The couple died later in a gun battle with police.

The New York case features a government request that is far less onerous or invasive for Apple and its cellphone technology; the extraction technique exists for that older operating system and it's been used before some 70 times before to assist investigators.

Since late 2014, that physical extraction technique hasn't existed on newer iPhones. In California, U.S. Magistrate Judge Sheri Pym ordered investigators to create specialized software to help the FBI bypass security protocols on the encrypted phone so investigators can test random passcode combinations in rapid sequence to access its data.

The court ruling comes one day before a Tuesday congressional hearing that will include testimony from FBI Director James Comey and Apple General Counsel Bruce Sewell on encryption and "balancing Americans' security and privacy."

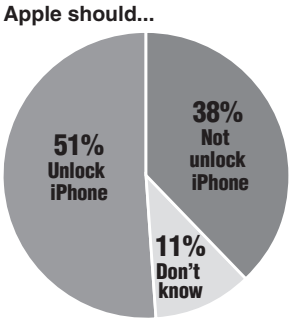
Orenstein said he was offering no opinion on whether in the instance of this case or others, "the government's legitimate interest in ensuring that no door is too strong to resist lawful entry should prevail against the equally legitimate societal interests arrayed against it here."

He said the interests at stake go beyond expectations of privacy and include the commercial interest in conducting business free of potentially harmful government intrusion and the "far more fundamental and universal interest" of protecting data from the harms of improper access and misuse.

Should Apple unlock killer's iPhone?

In response to court orders tied to the FBI investigation of the San Bernardino attacks

Apple should...



Source: Pew Research
Graphic: Tribune News Service

Google self-driving car strikes bus on California street

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A self-driving car being tested by Google struck a public bus on a Silicon Valley street, a fender-bender that appears to be the first time one of the tech company's vehicles caused a crash during testing.

Google accepted at least some responsibility for the collision, which occurred on Valentine's Day when one of the Lexus SUVs it has outfitted with sensors and cameras hit the side of the bus near the company's headquarters in Mountain View, California.

No one was injured, according to an accident report Google wrote and submitted to the California Department of Motor Vehicles. It was posted online Monday.

According to the report, Google's car intended to turn right off a major boulevard when it detected sandbags around a storm drain at the intersection.

The right lane was wide enough to let some cars turn and others go straight, but the Lexus needed to slide to its left within the right lane to get around the obstruction.

The Lexus was going 2 mph when it made the move and its left front struck the right side of the bus, which was going straight at 15 mph.

The car's test driver—who under state law must be in the front seat to grab the wheel when needed—thought the bus would yield and did not have control before the collision, Google said.

While the report does not address fault, Google said in a written statement, "We clearly bear some responsibility, because if our car hadn't moved there wouldn't have been a collision."

Chris Urmson, the head of Google's self-driving car project, said in a brief interview that he believes the Lexus was moving before the bus started to pass.

"We saw the bus, we tracked the bus, we thought the bus was going to slow down, we started to pull out, there was some momentum involved," Urmson told The Associated Press.

He acknowledged that Google's car did have some responsibility but said it was "not black and white."

Govt safety head: Total Takata recall won't make cars safer

DETROIT (AP)—The nation's top auto safety regulator says an immediate recall of all Takata air bags wouldn't provide significant safety benefits and could exceed the government's legal authority.

A recall of all Takata air bag inflators also would strain the network for replacement parts and increase uncertainty for consumers, Mark Rosekind, head of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, wrote in a letter to a legislator.

Takata's air bag inflators use the chemical ammonium nitrate to create a small explosion that fills air bags in a crash. But they can explode with too much force, blowing apart a metal canister and hurling shrapnel at drivers and passengers. At least 10 people have died worldwide and 139 have been hurt.

So far 14 automakers have recalled 24 million U.S. vehicles to replace the inflators. The problem has been linked to older cars with long-term exposure to high humidity. That's why replacement parts are being targeted to areas such as the U.S. Gulf Coast.

In a letter sent Friday to Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., Rosekind argued that a broader recall could divert parts from vehicles at higher risk "while achieving no identifiable safety benefit."

On Feb. 10, Nelson asked the agency to make Takata stop manufacturing ammonium nitrate inflators and urged it to recall all Takata inflators. Nelson and other lawmakers requested a total recall of the inflators after a South Carolina man was killed by a Takata driver's inflator when his pickup truck hit a stray cow. The driver's inflator in the man's Ford Ranger pickup had not been recalled, and previous tests had shown no problems that particular type of inflator.

Mexico will defer oil exploration projects to slash spending

MEXICO CITY (AP)—The state-run oil company, Petroleos Mexicanos, said Monday it will slash spending 22 percent and cut unprofitable production about 100,000 barrels a day as it struggles with liquidity problems and past-due payments to suppliers.

The company, known as Pemex, said it will cut $5.5 billion from its 2016 budget, delay deep-water exploration and decrease production of super-heavy crude because of low world oil prices.

Delaying production and exploration projects will account for about two-thirds of the $5.5 billion spending cut.

Pemex still faces a serious issue: It owes suppliers almost $7 billion, a debt the company acknowledges is a problem.

"Pemex is facing liquidity problems, but not one of solvency," said company general director Jose Antonio Gonzalez, who estimated daily production will fall about 4.5 percent from the current level of 2.23 million barrels a day to about 2.13 million by the end of the year.

He said Mexico's crude oil mix is selling for about half as much—$25 a barrel—as the $50 estimate included in last year's 2016 budget plan.

Gonzalez refused to say how many jobs might be cut. He said some of the delayed projects could be revived if partners were found who could lower production or exploration costs.

It was the latest in a series of blows for Pemex, which is widely viewed as over-staffed, inefficient and deeply indebted.

Mexico's government depends on Pemex for about one-third of its revenue. In a report Monday, Pemex said that after taxes and government fees, it lost $432 billion in 2015.

The company said crude production fell 6.7 percent in 2015 as older fields ran out. Revenue dropped 28.3 percent, mainly as a result of falling prices. Oil export revenue fell 35.4 percent. Accidents increased 25 percent from the previous year. Pemex also took a $154 billion exchange-rate loss as the peso plummeted against the dollar.

Pemex carries about $76 billion in debt.

As of late 2015, ratings companies said Pemex's pension liabilities amounted to about $90 billion, though the company recently signed an agreement that could lessen that burden by raising some retirement ages and starting individual retirement accounts for new hires.

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
16,516.50	1,932.23	4,557.95
-123.47	-15.82	-32.52
-0.74%	-0.81%	-0.71%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.3988	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7731	Philippine Peso	47.3797
British Pound	0.7172	Indian Rupee	68.2343	Singapore Dollar	1.4014
Canadian Dollar	1.3524	Indonesian Rupiah	13386.3	South Korean Won	1233
Chinese Yuan	6.5387	Japanese Yen	112.6588	Swiss Franc	0.9975
Euro	0.9187	Malaysian Ringgit	4.1855	Taiwan Dollar	33.2663
		New Zealand Dollar	1.5135	Thailand Baht	35.6036

Nation

GOP badly split as Trump, Clinton seek Super Tuesday wins

VALDOSTA, Ga. (AP)—On the eve of Super Tuesday's crucial primaries, a sharp new divide erupted between Republicans who pledge to fall in line behind Donald Trump if he wins their party's nomination and others who insist they can never back the bombastic billionaire.

The fissure could have major implications beyond the primaries, exposing the looming challenges in uniting the party after the election, no matter who wins.

Nebraska's Ben Sasse, a rising star among conservatives, became the first current senator to publicly raise the prospect of backing a third-party option if Trump clinches the nomination. In a letter posted on Facebook late Sunday, Sasse urged Republicans to consider whether a party led by Trump would still represent their interests.

"If our party is no longer working for the things we believe in—like defending the sanctity of life, stopping Obamacare, protecting the Second Amendment, etc.—then people of good conscience should stop supporting that party until it is reformed," he wrote.

The Associated Press asked Republican senators and governors across the country if they would support Trump if he secured the nomination. Just under half of those who responded would not commit to backing him, foreshadowing a potentially extraordinary break this fall.

"I am increasingly concerned by Donald Trump's statements and behavior, and I have serious concerns about his ability to win the general election and provide presidential leadership," Indiana Sen. Dan Coats said in a statement to the AP.

The concern among Republican leaders appeared to grow in light of Trump's refusal to immediately disavow former Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke's support.

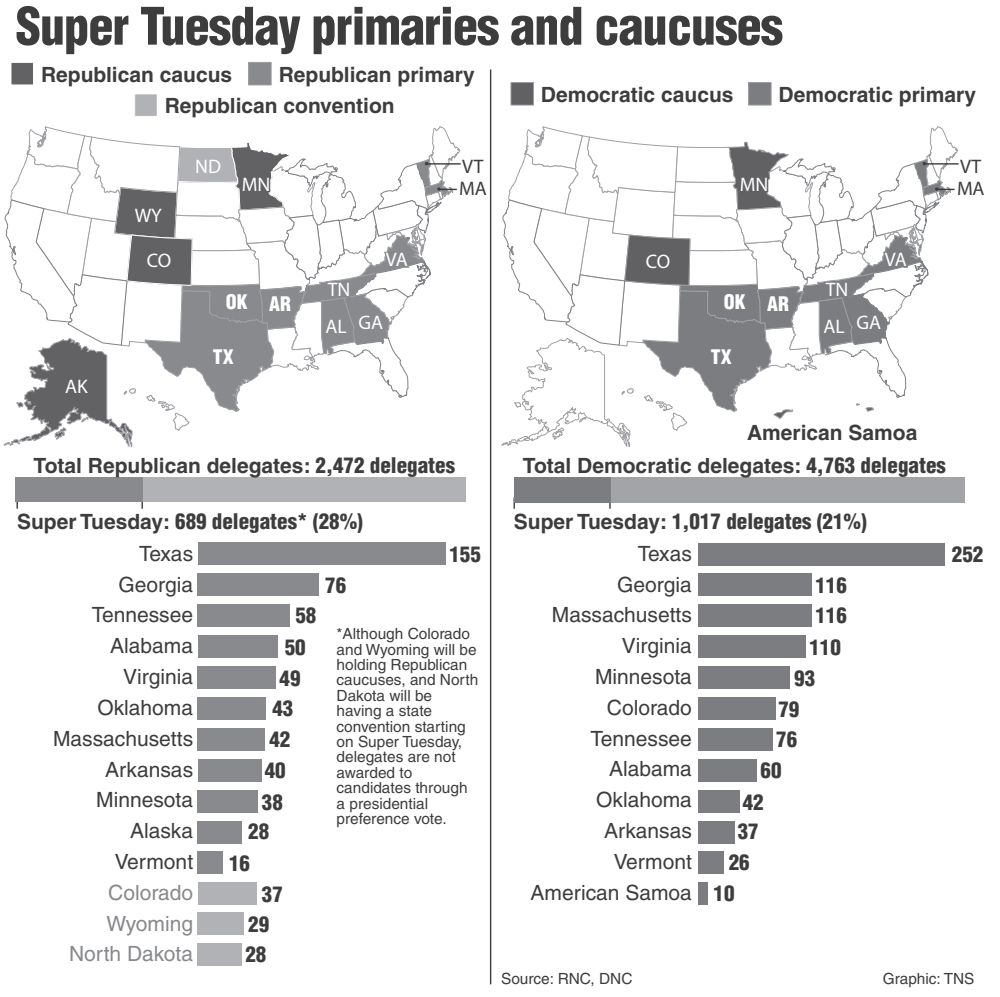
Mitt Romney, the party's 2012 nominee, called that "disqualifying." And South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, campaigning in Atlanta alongside Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, said she would "not stop fighting a man who refuses to disavow the KKK."

Trump said he had not understood the interviewer who first raised the question about Duke, and he did later repudiate him. "How many times do I have to continue to disavow people?" he said.

Several high-profile Republicans and conservative writers have embraced an anti-Trump social media campaign, using the Twitter hashtag "NeverTrump."

Trump has won three of four early primary contests, roiling a party that had assumed his populist appeal with voters would fizzle. Instead, he's only grown stronger and appears to be in commanding position heading into Super Tuesday, the biggest single-day delegate haul of the year.

Tensions boiled over during Trump's rally Monday in Radford, Virginia, where he was repeatedly disrupted by demonstrators, including 20 or more chanting "Black lives matter." At another point, he asked a protester, "Are you from Mexico?" after he was interrupted during remarks about immigration. He ordered several people to be removed, then cast himself as a unifying political force.



ACROSS THE NATION

4 hurt as student opens fire in Ohio school cafeteria

HAMILTON, Ohio (AP)—A 14-year-old boy pulled out a gun in a school cafeteria Monday and opened fire, hitting two students, and then ran from the school, threw the weapon down and was apprehended nearby with the help of a police dog, authorities said.

Two other Madison Local Schools students also were injured, possibly from shrapnel or while running away. None of the injuries appeared to be life-threatening, said Butler County Sheriff Richard Jones. Jones said the 14-year-old was a student and there was a motive to the shooting which he did not identify. The boy was charged preliminarily with two counts of attempted murder, two counts of felonious assault, inducing panic and making terrorist threats, Jones said. Students were eating in the cafeteria when the shooting happened around 11:30 a.m., Jones said. Afterward, classmates described a chaotic scene where they weren't sure what was happening at first. Some students fled outside. One student mistook the first shot for a potato chip bag being popped.

Court records: Soldier admits shooting wife, police officers

MANASSAS, Va. (AP)—An Army staff sergeant has admitted shooting his wife and three police officers who showed up at his front door, including a rookie officer working her first shift who died from her wounds, according to court records. Ronald Hamilton, 32, of Woodbridge, is charged with capital murder in Officer Ashley Guindon's shooting death Saturday. He also faces a murder charge in the shooting death of his wife, Crystal Hamilton, 29. An affidavit filed Monday states that officers arrived at the Hamiltons' home in reference to a 911 domestic dispute call, and were shot with a rifle after Hamilton met the officers at the front door.

Man fatally shot by North Carolina police officer

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP)—Community members gathered Monday night to remember a Raleigh man fatally shot by a police officer during a foot chase as he was trying to arrest him on drug charges. In the first several hours after the shooting, local television coverage showed police forming a line in the street near the downtown neighborhood where the shooting took place as a number of people gathered behind yellow crime-scene tape that blocked off the area and began chanting "No justice, no peace!" The chant has been used repeatedly across the nation in recent years to protest the deaths of black men following encounters with law enforcement officers. By late afternoon, the police tape had been taken down and by evening several dozen people had gathered with candles at a makeshift memorial near where the shooting happened. Several hundred people gathered in the evening to hear speakers address the crowd.

KKK leader: Request for police security denied before rally

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A Ku Klux Klan leader who was injured when his small group of demonstrators brawled with counter-protesters in a Southern California park this weekend said Monday that he called police beforehand asking for security and was told, "We don't do that."

Will Quigg said in an interview with The Associated Press that he contacted the Anaheim Police Department but that the agency denied his requests for a police presence. The KKK then told officers that the group would hire an outside security company.

"They said, 'No, you can't do that either,'" Quigg said.

The Police Department is facing scrutiny for its response after three people were stabbed and several others were injured in the melee Saturday involving several dozen people and spanning a city block. Investigators determined that Klan members acted in self-defense after the counter-protesters attacked.

The department notified the public that the KKK planned to hold an anti-immigration protest at a park about 3 miles from Disneyland, but at least one witness said he saw no uniformed officers when the attack began.

Police Sgt. Daron Wyatt said officers were present, but he has declined to say how many. He acknowledged that Quigg had contacted the department but believed that the group leader was asking for police to act as personal security guards.

"He was told how to contract for officers to do that, but did not want to spend the money," Wyatt said Monday.

Eugene O'Donnell, a professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, said the department's response about contracting officers is as if the KKK rally was the same as "an Oktoberfest or a New Year's Day event."

"It's their way of saying, 'We have no reason to believe there will be any trouble beyond the trouble you get at a rock concert," he said, adding police are obligated to ensure public safety.

Police departments are facing criticism for overpolicing, chilling free speech and being heavy-handed, O'Donnell said. That can make it difficult for officers to know how to handle a protest event.

Judge blocks Indiana's Syrian refugee order

By MICHAEL TARM
ASSOCIATED PRESS

A federal judge in Indianapolis on Monday blocked Republican Gov. Mike Pence's order that barred state agencies from helping Syrian refugees resettle in Indiana, saying the governor's directive "clearly discriminates" against refugees from the war-torn country.

The ruling grants a request for a preliminary injunction from Exodus Refugee Immigration, which helps resettle refugees in Indiana. The group sued shortly after Pence issued his order in November, saying the change would hurt aid groups by withholding reimbursements for housing and medical care to assist Syrian refugees.

Exodus and other organizations have continued to resettle Syrian refugees, though the state has sought to withhold funds earmarked for resettlements. Four Syrian refugees were settled in January, with Exodus planning to settle nearly 200 more this year, Monday's opinion said.

More than two dozen states, most with Republican governors, have taken similar action to suspend Syrian resettlement programs.

Pence released a statement saying he stood by his decision and would quickly appeal. The governor has repeatedly cited the November attacks in Paris as justification, noting that a passport found near one of the suicide bombers had been registered along the route asylum seekers from Syria were taking through Europe.

In her 36-page opinion, U.S. District Judge Tanya Walton Pratt said the state had a compelling concern to protect its residents, but that withholding federal grant money from the aid group "in no way furthers the state's asserted interest in the safety of Indiana residents."

Pratt also wrote that the governor's directive "clearly discriminates against Syrian refugees based on their national origin."

Asia

Aquino leads rite to rebury president at heroes cemetery

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—President Benigno Aquino III led ceremonies Monday to transfer the remains of a long-dead president to a Philippine heroes' cemetery where he has steadfastly refused to allow the burial of dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

The national tribute included a 21-gun salute and a funeral motorcade for President Elpidio Quirino, whose remains were reinterred from a Manila graveyard to the cemetery reserved for presidents, war veterans, statesmen and national artists.

Quirino was president from 1948 to 1953 and oversaw Philippine reconstruction after World War II. He died 60 years ago and is the third president to be buried in the heroes' cemetery, which opened in the 1940s as a burial site for Filipino war dead.

AP

A Filipino military officer passes the urn to relatives and descendants of former President Elpidio Quirino during ceremonies for the transfer of his remains at the Heroes' Cemetery in suburban Taguig city, east of Manila, Philippines on Monday, Feb. 29, 2016.

Aquino has refused to allow the burial there of Marcos, who was overthrown in a 1986 "people power" revolt after a two-decade reign tarnished by allegations of massive human rights violations and plunder.

Marcos lived in exile with his wife, Imelda, and children in Hawaii, where he died in 1989. His remains were later returned to his northern Philippine hometown of Batac, where his glass coffin has become a tourist attraction.

Near the end of Marcos's reign, Aquino's father, a former opposition senator, was assassinated while under military custody after arriving at Manila's international airport. The current leader's mother, Corazon Aquino, then helped lead the 1986 revolution that ousted Marcos and succeeded him.

When asked by The Associated Press in 2011 whether he would allow Marcos's burial at the heroes' cemetery, Aquino replied: "Not during my watch."

Japan signs pact to supply defense equipment to Philippines

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Japan signed an agreement Monday to supply defense equipment to the Philippines, the first such Japanese defense pact in a region where the U.S. allies have been alarmed by China's aggressive advances in disputed territories.

Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin said the agreement he signed with Japanese ambassador to Manila, Kazuhide Ishikawa, provides a framework for the supply of defense equipment and technology and would allow the Asian countries to carry out joint research and development projects.

Future talks will determine what defense equipment could be supplied, although Gazmin told reporters without elaborating that Japan has initially offered a surveillance aircraft.

"This agreement would really substantiate the Philippines and Japan being strategic partners," Gazmin said in remarks during the signing ceremony at the Department of Defense in metropolitan Manila which was not opened to the press. "Let me stress that what underpins this agreement is not only our desire to enhance our respective defense capabilities but also to contribute to regional peace and stability."

Neither side mentioned China's increasingly assertive behavior in disputed areas but that has been a major security concern by both countries, which are close American allies. "It's not directed against any country," Gazmin said of the new defense deal on Saturday.

The Philippines has turned to the United States, and now Japan, as it scrambles to modernize its ill-equipped military after territorial disputes with China began escalating four years ago. Japan has a separate territorial spat with China that has flared on and off in the East China Sea.

The Philippines' security aspirations dovetail with Japan's nascent steps to be a larger security presence in the region, where memories remain of its brutal World War II invasions.

The two countries have openly brought their security and political ties to new levels, including by holding joint naval search and rescue drills last year.

Philippine President Benigno Aquino III and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe have swapped visits and vowed to intensify defense cooperation, sparking talks about a possible security pact that will allow Japanese forces to hold larger drills with Filipino troops in the Philippines. The Philippines has signed such visiting forces accords with the United States and Australia.

Last year, Japan's parliament approved contentious legislation that enhances the role of the country's military by loosening post-World War II constraints. Its military can now defend its allies even when the country isn't under attack and work more closely with other nations.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Ex-Malaysian leader Mahathir quits ruling party in protest

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Former Malaysian leader Mahathir Mohamad has quit the ruling Malay party, saying Monday it has been hijacked by embattled Prime Minister Najib Razak to protect his own interests. Najib has come under pressure to resign after documents leaked last July showed more than $700 million was channeled into his private bank accounts. The attorney general decided last month not to prosecute Najib, saying most of the money was a personal donation from Saudi Arabia's royal family. Mahathir said he decided to quit the United Malays National Organization, or UMNO, because it was now "a party dedicated to supporting Najib, protecting Najib and upholding whatever he does, including some of the wrong things he has done." "I feel embarrassed that I am associated with a party that is seen as supporting corruption," he told a news conference. "I am very much ashamed of all that is happening, I decided that I cannot be a party to all these things, so the least I can to do is leave the party."

Tiger Airways plane makes emergency landing in Melbourne

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—A Tiger Airways jet made an emergency landing in the Australian city of Melbourne on Tuesday after an odor was detected and crew members were reported ill, the government said. The Airbus A320 carrying 80 passengers and crew from Brisbane declared an emergency as it approached Melbourne Airport on Tuesday morning, Transport Minister Darren Chester said in a statement. "Tiger Airlines Flight TGW 511 reported an odor in the cockpit and cabin," the statement said. "There were reports that crew members were taken ill."

Cambodia says 5 were involved in attack on French tourists

BANGKOK (AP)—Cambodia says five of its citizens were involved in an attack in eastern Thailand where four French tourists were assaulted, including two women who were raped. The attack raises fresh concerns about tourist safety in Thailand, which hosted a record 29 million visitors last year. Cambodia's Foreign Ministry said in a statement Tuesday that the men had admitted to the Cambodian ambassador to Thailand that they were involved in the incident. The statement said the men were drunk at the time. Thai police have already had the suspects in the attack on Koh Kut reenact the crime, a standard procedure in Thai justice. Irate residents tried to attack the men but police pushed them away. Police say they will press charges of rape and conspiracy to commit assault against them.

N. Korea puts tearful detained American before cameras

PYONGYANG, North Korea (AP)—North Korea presented a detained American student before the media on Monday in Pyongyang, where he tearfully apologized for attempting to steal a political banner—at the behest, he said, of a member of a church back home who wanted it as a "trophy"—from a staff-only section of the hotel where he had been staying.

North Korea announced in late January it had arrested Otto Warmbier, a 21-year-old University of Virginia undergraduate student. It said that after entering the country as a tourist he committed an anti-state crime with "the tacit connivance of the U.S. government and under its manipulation."

No details of what kind of charges or punishment Warmbier faces were immediately released.

According to Warmbier's statement Monday, he wanted the banner with a political slogan on it as a trophy for the church member, who was the mother of a friend.

In previous cases, people who have been detained in North Korea and made a public confession often recant those statements after their release.

He was arrested while visiting the country with Young Pioneer Tours, an agency specializing in travel to North Korea, which is strongly discouraged by the U.S. State Department. He had been staying at the Yanggakdo International Hotel, which is located on an island in a river that runs through Pyongyang, the capital.

It is common for sections of tourist hotels to be reserved for North Korean staff and off-limits to foreigners.

In Washington, State Department spokesman John Kirby said that as a general practice, it was not uncommon for North Korea to detain and imprison people on false or "trumped-up" charges, and use detentions for propaganda purposes.

But Kirby said he could not comment on Warmbier's case because of privacy considerations, nor on whether Sweden, which handles consular affairs for the U.S. in North Korea, has had access to him.

In his comments, Warmbier said he was offered a used car worth $10,000 by a member of the church. He said the church member told him the slogan would be hung on its wall as a trophy. He also said he was told that if he was detained and didn't return, $200,000 would be paid to his mother in the form of a charitable donation.

Warmbier identified the church as the Friendship United Methodist Church, which is in his hometown, Wyoming, Ohio.

Meshach Kanyion, pastor of the church, would not confirm whether he knows Warmbier or if he is a church member.

"I don't have any comment at this time," he told The Associated Press.

Warmbier's parents said they had not heard from their son since his arrest and were greatly relieved to finally see a picture of him.

"You can imagine how deeply worried we were and what a traumatic experience this has been for us," Warmbier's father, Fred Warmbier, said in a statement provided by the University of Virginia.

"I hope the fact that he has conveyed his sincere apology for anything that he may have done wrong will now make it possible for the (North Korean) authorities to allow him to return home," he said.

The university said it had no immediate comment other than that it was in close contact with Warmbier's family.

World

Russian warplanes sit idle on Syria base during cease-fire

HEMEIMEEM AIR BASE, Syria (AP)—Dozens of Russian warplanes sat idle Tuesday on the tarmac at this Russian air base in Syria on the fourth day of a cease-fire brokered by Moscow and Washington.

The apparent lull in action witnessed by the AP on a trip to the base, which was organized by the Russian defense and foreign ministries, contrasts with the hectic operation AP reporters saw here on a previous visit in January.

The cease-fire that began at midnight Friday has brought a notable reduction in hostilities for the first time in the five-year war that has killed more than 250,000 people, displaced half of Syria's population and flooded Europe with refugees.

But the truce has remained highly fragile with violations reported in many areas with the opposition and the Syrian government blaming each other.

The Islamic State group and al-Qaida's branch in Syria, Jabhat al-Nusra, are excluded from the truce.

The Russian military said Monday that its warplanes struck al-Nusra targets north of Aleppo. It said that groups that have declared their adherence to the cease-fire are not being targeted.

AP

In this Jan. 20, 2016 photo, a Russian soldier stands guard next to a Su-34 bomber at Hemeimeem air base in Syria.

During the five-month Russian air blitz that began on Sept.30, each jet flew several combat sorties on an average day, amounting to an impressive total of more than 6,000 missions

The Russian Defense Ministry said late Monday that the cease-fire was largely holding despite sporadic violations. Lt. Gen. Sergei Kuralenko, who heads the cease-fire coordination center at the Russian base in Syria, voiced satisfaction with what he described as a good level of coordination with his U.S. counterparts in Amman, Jordan.

Russia and the U.S. have agreed to exchange information about opposition groups abiding by the truce and jointly tackle any possible violations.

For President Vladimir Putin, the cease-fire deal offers a chance to capitalize on a successful air campaign that has helped Syrian President Bashar Assad's military reverse the tide of war and make significant gains near Aleppo and in several other areas.

The U.S.-Russian-brokered truce agreement achieves Putin's key strategic goal of having Moscow appear as an equal partner of Washington in tackling the Syrian crisis.

The deal raises Russia's global clout, allows Putin to appear as a peacemaker and marks the first time Russia has engaged the U.S. in a military-to-military dialogue since the start of the Ukrainian crisis two years ago.

By exchanging target information with the U.S., Moscow also hopes to deflect Washington's criticism that it was striking moderate opposition groups instead of its declared target, the Islamic State.

The truce comes at a time when Assad's military has cut most supply routes to Aleppo, Syria's largest city and its commercial capital before the war. that has been split into government- and opposition-controlled parts since 2012.

The Syrian army's successes around Aleppo and in other areas have strengthened Assad's hand ahead of planned peace talks in Geneva tentatively set for next week.

The negotiations broke down a few weeks ago before starting in earnest with the opposition demanding an end to the Russian airstrikes as a key condition to proceed.

UN chief: Syria cease-fire holds despite growing breaches

BEIRUT (AP)—U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said Monday that a shaky cease-fire in Syria is holding "by and large" on its third day despite sporadic fighting and growing accusations of violations.

A war of words between the Syrian government and Saudi Arabia, a key backer of the opposition, has meanwhile added to the rising tensions.

The Syrian Foreign Ministry said recent statements by Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir were "lies meant to boost the morale" of militants who have suffered setbacks in Syria in recent weeks and demonstrate the kingdom's "destructive role" in Syria.

Al-Jubeir had reiterated Saudi Arabia's longstanding position that Syrian President Bashar Assad must leave power, either peacefully or through military means. The foreign minister also accused Syrian forces of violating the cease-fire.

Speaking to reporters Monday in Geneva, Ban confirmed receiving a letter from the High Negotiations Committee, the main umbrella opposition group, complaining of continuing violations by the Syrian government and its Russian and Iranian backers.

The letter sent Sunday urged the U.N. to help "specify the territory covered by the truce to prevent hostilities."

The Russian and U.S.-brokered cease-fire that went into effect Saturday excludes the Islamic State group as well as al-Qaida's branch in Syria, the Nusra Front. The cease-fire has significantly reduced violence across the war-ravaged country, bringing some respite to civilians, particularly from airstrikes.

But accusations of breaches by both sides threaten to undermine the deal, which aims to bring the Syrian government and the opposition back to peace talks in Geneva next week. Ban told reporters he wanted the cease-fire extended beyond the planned duration of two weeks.

Study: 1st evidence that Zika may cause temporary paralysis

LONDON (AP)—Scientists may have the first evidence that Zika can cause temporary paralysis, according to a new study of patients who developed the rare condition during an outbreak of the virus in Tahiti two years ago.

Zika is currently spreading with alarming speed across the Americas. The World Health Organization declared the epidemic to be a global emergency several weeks ago based on suspicions it may be behind a surge in disturbing birth defects and in Guillain-Barre syndrome, a neurological illness that mostly lasts a few weeks.

Before reaching South America last year, the mosquito-spread Zika had triggered outbreaks in the South Pacific on Yap island in Micronesia and in French Polynesia, including its largest island, Tahiti.

Researchers in Tahiti, France and elsewhere went back and analyzed blood samples from all 42 adults diagnosed with Guillain-Barre syndrome from the 2013-14 outbreak; nearly everyone showed signs of a previous Zika infection.

They were compared with patients who did not have the condition and did not have any Zika symptoms but were treated at the same hospital for other illnesses. Tests showed only half of that group of 98 had apparently been infected with the normally mild virus.

The research was published online Monday in the journal Lancet.

"The evidence that links Zika virus with Guillain-Barre syndrome is now substantially more compelling," said Peter Barlow, an infectious diseases expert at Edinburgh Napier University who was not part of the study. But he noted in a statement that more research was needed before reaching the same conclusion about the outbreak in the Americas, where local factors may be playing a role.

Zika is mostly spread by mosquito bites and in most people causes symptoms including fever, muscle pain and a rash. About 80 percent of people who catch the disease don't report any illness.

Iranian hard-liners losers in parliament, clerical body

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Iranian voters dealt hard-liners a serious blow in elections for parliament and an influential clerical body, favoring reformists and relative moderates who support last year's nuclear deal in the country's first elections since the landmark agreement, results released Monday showed.

Reformists, who favor expanded social freedoms and engagement with the West, won at least 85 seats, according to final results released by the Interior Ministry and broadcast on state TV. Moderate conservatives—who split with the hard-line camp and support the nuclear deal—won 73, giving the two blocs together a majority over hard-liners in the 290-seat assembly.

The vote isn't expected to herald large-scale change in Iranian policies, but may make it easier for President Hassan Rouhani to deliver in areas such as promoting social freedoms and reforming the economy.

Hard-liners won just 68 seats, down from 112 in the current parliament. Five seats will go to religious minorities, and the remaining 59 will be decided in a runoff, likely to be held in April.

While none of the country's three main political camps will dominate the next parliament, reformists and moderate conservatives are expected to work together—at least on economic issues.

That should make the assembly less hostile to Rouhani, a moderate elected in 2013 on pledges to relax restrictions on freedom of expression and improve ties with the West.

"Rouhani will face a friendly parliament," said Ali Reza Khamesian, the campaign manager for top reformist vote getter Mohammad Reza Aref. Khamesian said the president could count on parliament's support to drive through economic reforms and expand social freedoms.

"Getting parliamentary approval to lift restrictions on women attending male sports stadiums and providing greater protection for women's rights will be among the measures" Rouhani can achieve, he said.

Good Housekeeping

DIGGIN' IN: Do read this list of tips for the home landscaper

By KATHY VAN MULLEKOM
DAILY PRESS

Here's a column most gardening writers hope to publish in their careers—a do's and don'ts list for gardening hobbyists and professionals.

Yes, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. But, remember, your neighbors have to look at what you do.

■ Why do you—homeowners and landscape companies—groom a yard, making it look so lovely, and then blow all the grass clippings into the street?

Think about it—the street is like the appealing appetizer before the main course—your lovely yard and home. Plus, debris in the street washes into storm drains where it helps pollute waterways. So, when you mow and trim your yard, or have it done, clean up the street, too. Then, stand back and look at how better the overall picture looks.

■ Why do you get energetic in spring and put in a huge shrub and flower garden, mulch it and make it all pretty—and then never weed it the rest of the year? Or, abandon a new garden without finishing it.

Come spring, it's fun to watch inspired homeowners tilling up soil to plant new trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals, and then add fresh mulch. Weeks go by and the bed begs for attention. Weeds pop up, first around the edges, then around the middle and soon weeds are covering the entire bed. What a waste of time, money and opportunity to beautify life. If you have no intention of maintaining a bed, why create it in the first place and ultimately end up with an eyesore. Instead, be honest about your willingness to work in a yard, and just try to have neatly mowed grass, which your neighbors will appreciate.

■ Why do you let your grass grow so tall before cutting it and then leav clumps on the lawn?

It's smart to mow and let your clippings fall back into the lawn but only if you have a mulching mower and cut your grass frequently so the clippings decompose. As those clippings decompose, they return valuable nutrients and moisture back into the soil. However, when you cut your grass when it's four inches or taller and let the clippings clump and stay, you create a visual eyesore, decaying grass smell and wasted clippings.

MCT
A new garden started and then abandoned becomes a neighborhood eyesore.

■ Why do you put in expensive new plants and never water them in the hot, dry summer?

Many professional landscape designers complain about this problem, and actually leave "please water your plants" notes on front doors where they recently installed new plant material. All plants, even rugged native species, need ample water the first year in order to establish healthy root systems. The second year, most plants can tolerate some minor dry spells. Shallow-rooted plants like dogwoods and azaleas always need supplemental water during droughts. But, remember, too much water is just as bad as too little water, so know your plant's moisture needs to ensure its good health.

■ Why do you let your dog poop along the street and in people's yards?

Pet waste along streets and yards is nasty looking and unhealthy for people and the environment. When you walk your dog, please take along a plastic grocery or newspaper bag and pick up poop—no matter whether your dog is large or small, poop matters. Besides messing up shoes, pet poop harbors pathogens that can impact air and water quality. Pet waste washes into storm drains and then into local waterways where it turns the water into a cloudy, green, foul-smelling mess with no oxygen for aquatic life; the end result is beach closings and fishing restrictions.

FACEBOOK FRIENDS SAY

When Facebook friends were asked to weigh in on do's and don'ts for homeowners' yards and homes in general, here's what they said:

■ Please do not put out lawn decorations and then not keep them clean and maintained. — **Bea**

■ Clean up your leaves in the fall.—**Debbie**

■ Holiday décor, Halloween is not in December, and Christmas is not in February … .etc. — **Jean**

■ How about keeping your yard mowed and trimmed regularly. — **Donna**

■ I love the red mulch … reminds me of redwood trees. — **Cecelia**

■ Hate, hate, hate red mulch and junky cars in the driveway. — **Lynn**

■ How about that fake rubber mulch looking thing people put around trees, hate that too. — **Beth**

■ Know your porch's proportions, and keep things in scale and uncluttered … And, for goodness sake, take your huge stroller indoors, don't leave it on your lawn or porch. — **Matt**

■ I hate those free form wild flower gardens that extend to the curb. Keep that nonconforming, asymmetrical, ugly thing you call tranquil in the backyard because us right brainers call it an eyesore — **Robyn**

■ Store a huge RV in the front driveway. You could have a blue ribbon landscape, but all anyone sees is a gigantic eyesore. **– Glenda**

Living Smart: Which shower door is right for your bathroom?

By KALEY BELAKOVICH
ANGIE'S LIST

Installing a new shower? Unless you're getting a walk-in shower or a bathtub/shower insert—which sometimes only requires a shower curtain—you'll need to select a type of shower door.

Here's some information to help you choose.

Sliding shower doors

Sliding shower doors, also referred to as bypass doors, take up the least bathroom space of any type of shower door because they never expand inside or outside the shower. They typically consist of two to three panels that slide past each other on tracks along the top and bottom of the door.

Because sliding shower doors come with at least two panels, they're best used in wide shower openings measuring at least 60 inches. Framed sliding shower doors at a quarter-inch glass thickness, uninstalled, typically cost $175 to $500.

_Round shower doors

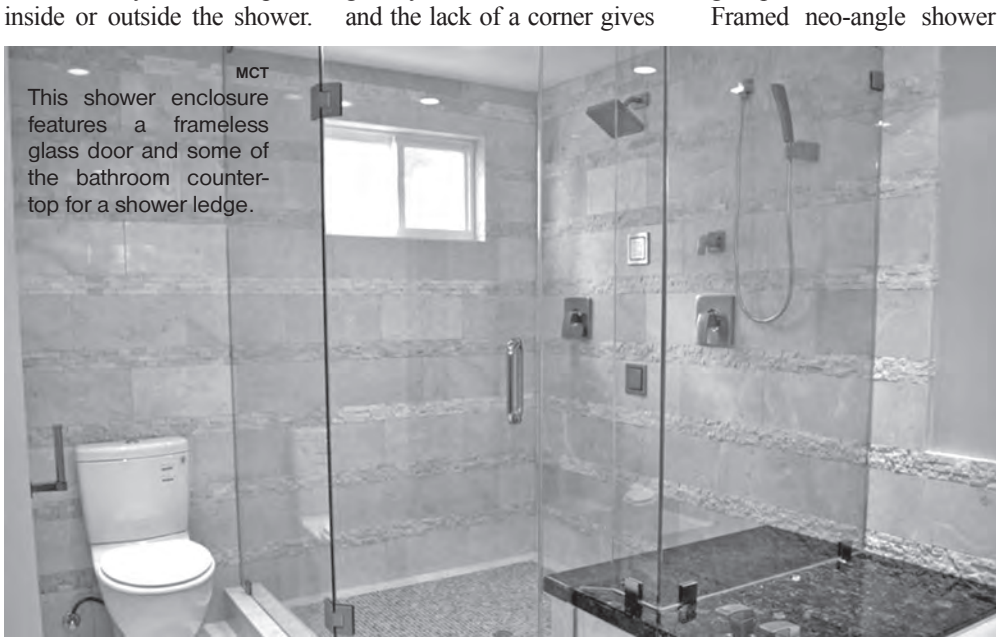
Round shower doors, unlike most other types, open inward. They are ideal for corner showers. The curved glass gives you more elbow room, and the lack of a corner gives your bathroom more open floor space. They're also easier to clean because you don't have to dig into the corners.

Framed round shower enclosures, uninstalled, typically cost $500 to $1,000.

Neo-angle shower doors

Neo-angle shower doors are best suited for corner showers. They are designed to keep the door in the open space of the bathroom instead of forcing the door next to a wall. These shower doors typically have three panels: the door, and an angled panel on each side.

Framed neo-angle shower doors with a quarter-inch glass thickness typically cost between $325 and $900 before installation.



MCT
This shower enclosure features a frameless glass door and some of the bathroom countertop for a shower ledge.

Pivot shower doors

Pivot shower doors are the traditional swinging hinged doors. They typically open outward from one side and are only installed in standalone shower stalls.

They're ideal for showers under 60 inches that are too small for sliding doors.

For wider openings, like those that are 48 inches, you can choose a double-hinged mount, which allows the door to pivot both inward and outward.

Framed pivot shower doors with a quarter-inch glass thickness cost $140 to $500 before installation.

Bifold shower doors

A bifold shower door combines the sliding function of bypass shower doors with the movement of pivot doors. A bifold door has two panels attached by a hinge. When the user pulls the handle, the two panels fold inward toward each other.

If you're buying a framed bifold shower door of a quarter-inch glass thickness, expect to pay $325 to $700 before installation.

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING ONE

Banana Cream Pie

1 (9-inch) homemade, frozen or refrigerated pie shell

Custard:

2/3 cup sugar

1/4 cup cornstarch

Pinch salt

3 cups whole milk

4 large egg yolks, lightly beaten

2 tablespoons butter

1 tablespoon vanilla extract

3 ripe medium bananas

Homemade Whipped Cream:

1/2 cups heavy or whipping cream

1 tablespoon sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. Bake pie shell as directed. Cool.

2. Meanwhile, prepare Custard: In 3-quart saucepan, combine sugar, cornstarch and salt. With wire whisk, beat in milk and egg yolks. Cook over medium heat until mixture thickens and boils, stirring constantly; boil 1 minute. Remove from heat; stir in butter and vanilla. Cool 10 minutes.

3. Slice bananas. Arrange half of bananas in bottom of pie shell; spread with half of custard. Repeat with remaining bananas and custard. Press plastic wrap onto surface of custard. Refrigerate pie until custard is set, at least 4 hours or overnight.

4. To serve, prepare Homemade Whipped Cream: In medium bowl, with mixer at medium speed, beat cream, sugar and vanilla to stiff peaks. Remove plastic cover and spread cream over filling. Makes about 10 servings.

* Each serving: About 440 calories, 6g protein, 42g carbohydrate, 28g total fat (16g saturated), 1g fiber, 164mg cholesterol, 200mg sodium.

For thousands of triple-tested recipes, visit our website at www.goodhousekeeping.com/recipes/.

Life & Style

Vatican media praises 'Spotlight' as giving voice to victims

VATICAN CITY (AP)—The Vatican newspaper praised Oscar-winning film "Spotlight" on Monday as having given voice to the "profound pain" of the faithful over the reality of clerical sex abuse, and insisted it's not an anti-Catholic film.

L'Osservatore Romano dedicated two articles in its afternoon editions to the Academy Awards and the Best Picture won by "Spotlight," about the Boston Globe's 2002 expose of the hundreds of Boston children who were raped and molested by Catholic priests and the church's systematic cover-up of the crimes.

L'Osservatore quoted producer Michael Sugar's acceptance speech- "Pope Francis, it's time to protect the children and restore the faith"—saying even his appeal was positive.

"It means there's still faith in the institution, there's faith in a pope who is continuing the cleanup started by his predecessor as cardinal. And there's still trust in a faith that has at its heart the defense of victims and the protection of innocents," said the piece by Lucetta Scaraffia, one of L'Osservatore's main columnists and the editor of its monthly edition on women's issues.

She said the film wasn't anti-Catholic "because it manages to give voice to the shock and profound pain of the faithful when confronted with discovery of this horrible reality."

Vatican Radio, which gave the film an enthusiastically positive review in October when it screened at the Venice Film Festival, also praised "Spotlight" in its Oscar wrap as a "rigorous and authentic" reconstruction, and cited Sugar's appeal.

The reaction marks a dramatic turnabout by the Vatican from a decade ago and even as recently as 2010, when the last convulsion of the long-running scandal flared as thousands of new victims came forward in Europe, Latin America and beyond. Then, the Vatican paper of record was a vehicle for ringing defenses of how the Holy See had responded and criticism for the "unjust attacks" being hurled against its pope.

Vatican praise for "Spotlight" reflects the generally positive reviews the film has had in Catholic circles: Just a few weeks ago, it was screened in the Vatican for members of Francis' sex abuse advisory commission. And the Rev. Tim Kesicki, president of the Jesuit Conference in the U.S., said he had recently invited his staff to see it at a Washington theater. He said they left feeling "both moved and devastated."

AP

This photo provided by courtesy of Open Road Films shows, Rachel McAdams, from left, as Sacha Pfeiffer, Mark Ruffalo as Michael Rezendes and Brian d'Arcy James as Matt Carroll, in a scene from the film, "Spotlight."

Abe Vigoda's daughter angry that Oscars ignored actor

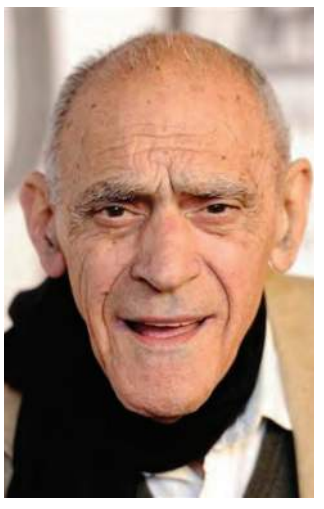
NEW YORK (AP)—Famously long rumored to be dead, beloved character actor Abe Vigoda died for real in January at age 94. But the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences didn't seem to notice.

In any case, it omitted Vigoda from the "In Memoriam" package on Sunday's Oscarcast, and his daughter is incensed.

"Abe's family feels disappointed and cheated by the Academy," said Carol Vigoda Fuchs on Monday. "Abe gave his life and heart to acting, and a simple tribute in recognition of his devotion was overlooked."

Vigoda, of course, was unforgettable in "The Godfather" for his performance as Salvatore "Sal" Tessio, the doomed Mafia soldier.

So Fuchs wonders why the Academy forgot him, even as it paid tribute to Alex Rocco, seen in the same 1972 film as Las Vegas casino owner Moe Green. Rocco, who died last July at age 79, was among the four dozen industry figures honored in the segment.



AP

In an April 10, 2011, file photo, actor Abe Vigoda arrives at the 2011 TV Land Awards in New York.

Although Tessio is likely Vigoda's best-known role, his stardom wasn't limited to "The Godfather." He also played over-the-hill detective Phil Fish in the 1970s TV comedy "Barney Miller" and its spinoff, "Fish."

Did the Academy pass the buck to the Emmys to honor Vigoda as a TV star when it airs its awards show this fall?

Message of Appreciation

Mr. Robert A. Schrack, his children and family of the late

Agnes E. Andres Schrack

Extend our praise and acceptance of the Will of our Lord God Almighty. May our beloved find solace and peace in the arms of our Savior and rejoice in her new life.

Words cannot adequately express our profound gratitude and sincere appreciation to all our friends and family and members of the community for all your kind words of comfort and taking the time to join us in the Celebration of the Eucharist in honor of our beloved †Agnes E. Andres Schrack. Your presence at the nightly mass and rosary, your prayers, love, support and condolences have helped us tremendously to give us courage and strength as we accept the will of God and learn to live on without her physical presence. Know that you are treasured in our hearts and will be remembered in our thoughts and prayers.

We especially would like to thank the following individuals for their thoughtful support and kind considerations:

Frances Ramon, Children & Family
Josephine Sablan & Family
Susannah Blau & Family
Miriam Chin & Family
Stol Family from Guam & Palau
Family Choir & Ave Maria Choir
Maria Stol & Gloria Ramon for leading Rosaries
Mr. & Mrs. Angel and Margret Reyes
Mr. & Mrs. Rex and Marie Moses
Rep. Roman Benavente
Rep. Joseph "Lee Pan" Guerrero
Rep. Ed Propst
Sen. Arnold Palacios
Sen. Sixto Igisomar
CNMI Medical Referral Office on Saipan and Philippines
St. Luke's Medical Center Global City – Doctors, Nurses and Staff
San Antonio Parish
Father Romil Aperocho
Angaur State
Angaur CNMI Club

Mesulang, Melau, Si Yu'us Ma'ase and Thank you very much.

'Deadpool' earns $31.1M in third weekend

The R-rated antihero romp starring Ryan Reynolds as the Marvel mercenary earned $31.1 million in its third weekend, bringing its domestic haul to $285.2 million.

The mythological saga "Gods of Egypt" featuring Gerard Butler as a rebellious deity opened in a distant second place with $14.1 million.

The top 20 movies at U.S. and Canadian theaters Friday through Sunday, followed by distribution studio, gross, number of theater locations, average receipts per location, total gross and number of weeks in release, as compiled Monday by comScore:

1. **"Deadpool,"** 20th Century Fox, $31,115,195, 3,856 locations, $8,069 average, $285,254,204, 3 weeks.
2. **"Gods of Egypt,"** Lionsgate, $14,123,903, 3,117 locations, $4,531 average, $14,123,903, 1 week.
3. **"Kung Fu Panda 3,"** 20th Century Fox, $8,898,439, 3,296 locations, $2,700 average, $128,353,798, 5 weeks.
4. **"Risen,"** Sony, $6,815,021, 2,915 locations, $2,338 average, $22,518,768, 2 weeks.
5. **"Triple 9,"** Open Road, $6,109,085, 2,205 locations, $2,771 average, $6,109,085, 1 week.
6. **"Eddie the Eagle,"** 20th Century Fox, $6,084,682, 2,042 locations, $2,980 average, $6,084,682, 1 week.
7. **"The Witch,"** A24, $5,066,908,2,204 locations, $2,299 average, $16,675,437, 2 weeks.
8. **"How to be Single,"** Warner Bros., $5,008,362, 3,047 locations, $1,644 average, $39,479,228, 3 weeks.
9. **"Race,"** Focus Features, $4,103,290, 2,387 locations, $1,719 average, $13,692,912, 2 weeks.
10. **"The Revenant,"** 20th Century Fox, $3,953,291, 1,645 locations, $2,403 average, $170,659,760, 10 weeks.
11. **"Star Wars: The Force Awakens,"** Disney, $2,986,439, 1,433 locations, $2,084 average, $925,988,323, 11 week.
12. **"Zoolander 2,"** Paramount, $2,232,829, 1,974 locations, $1,131 average, $27,343,298, 3 weeks.
13. **"Ride Along 2,"** Universal, $1,506,610, 941 locations, $1,601 average, $88,493,095, 7 weeks.
14. **"Hail, Caesar!,"** Universal, $1,208,080, 959 locations, $1,260 average, $28,380,890, 4 weeks.
15. **"The Lady in the Van,"** Sony Pictures Classics, $1,179,937, 602 locations, $1,960 average, $5,823,009, 7 weeks.
16. **"The Big Short,"** Paramount, $1,009,722, 543 locations, $1,860 average, $68,520,574, 12 weeks.
17. **"The Boy,"** STX Entertainment, $891,992, 672 locations, $1,327 average, $34,544,271, 6 weeks.
18. **"The 5th Wave,"** Sony, $852,155, 588 locations, $1,449 average, $33,096,957, 6 weeks.
19. **"The Choice,"** Lionsgate, $829,725, 1,060 locations, $783 average, $18,018,692, 4 weeks.
20. **"Brooklyn,"** Fox Searchlight, $736,962, 477 locations, $1,545 average, $36,511,589, 17 weeks.

This image released by Twentieth Century Fox shows Ryan Reynolds in a scene from the film, "Deadpool." AP

In Celebration of His New Life

†Joaquin Palacios Cabrera

Lovingly known as "Jack"

February 12, 1959 - February 25, 2016

In his New Life, he now joins his:

Parents: †Joaquin Samuel Tenorio Cabrera
†Isabel Palacios Cabrera

Daughter: † June Yumul Cabrera

His memories will forever live in the hearts of his:

Wife: **Myra Yumul Cabrera**

Children: **Carla** & Jesse and children
Charmaine and children
Joaquin Jose and children
Adrian & Kim and children
Chuck & Lisa and children
Shana & Ray and children
Clara and children

Brothers and Sisters: Ernestina Cabrera/Eddie Duenas and children
Emmanuel/Rosalie Cabrera and children
Maria Rosa/†David San Nicolas and children
†Ramon/Lina Cabrera and children
Leolila/Frank Vibar and children
Joseph P. Cabrera and children
Tracy/Ton Estrada and children
Elizabeth/Vidal Camacho and children
Doris/Ton Castro and children
Glen/Gina Cabrera [Yvonne]
Melissa/Andy Camacho and children

Parents In-Law: Elena Manasala/Abelardo Yumul

He will also be missed by numerous uncles, aunts, cousins, nieces, nephews, relatives and friends and Yumul family.

Mass of Intention is being celebrated each evening at 6:00pm at San Antonio Church.
Funeral Services will be held on Friday, March 04, 2016. His remains will be escorted from Nuestra Senora dela Paz Memorial Chapel at 7:30 am to San Antonio Church. Responso Service will be at 8:00 am followed by Holy Rosary at 8:15 am. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:30 am followed by Interment service at Chalan Kanoa Cemetery, where he will be at a peaceful rest.

Un Dangkulu Na Si Yu'us Ma'ase and Thank you.

Myra Yumul Cabrera , Children and Family

Tough-guy journeyman actor George Kennedy dies at 91

LOS ANGELES (AP)— George Kennedy, the hulking, tough-guy character actor who won an Academy Award for his portrayal of a savage chain-gang convict in the 1960s classic "Cool Hand Luke," has died.

His grandson Cory Schenkel says Kennedy died on Sunday morning of old age in Boise, Idaho. He was 91.

He had undergone emergency triple bypass surgery in 2002. That same year, he and his late wife moved to Idaho to be closer to their daughter and her family, though he still was involved in occasional film projects.

His biggest acting achievement came in "Cool Hand Luke," a 1967 film about a rebellious war hero played by Paul Newman who is bent on bucking the system as a prisoner on a Southern chain gang. Its theme of rebelling against authority and the establishment helped make it one of the most important films of the tumultuous 1960s.

Kennedy played the role of Dragline, the chain-gang boss who goes from Luke's No. 1 nemesis to his biggest disciple as Newman's character takes on folk hero status among fellow inmates. The movie garnered four Academy Award nominations, and Kennedy was named best supporting actor.

AP

In this April 10, 1968, file photo, George Kennedy poses with his Oscar in Santa Monica, Calif, after winning best supporting actor for "Cool Hand Luke."

Newman and Kennedy provided a spectacular one-two punch—Luke as the reticent anti-hero, Dragline as an illiterate brute. They shared several memorable scenes, including one in which Kennedy's character wins a bet by getting Luke to eat 50 eggs in an hour.

After the critical and commercial success of "Cool Hand Luke," Kennedy carved out a niche as one of Hollywood's most recognizable supporting actors. He had parts in several action flicks in the 1970s, played Leslie Nielsen's sidekick in the "Naked Gun" spoofs and was J.R. Ewing's business rival in the final seasons of "Dallas."

Neighbor fired air rifle, unaware he hit Salma Hayek's dog

SEATTLE (AP)—A neighbor of Salma Hayek's Washington state ranch told investigators he shot at the actress' beloved Belgian Malinois with an air rifle because it was in his garage and fighting with his own dogs, investigators said Monday in finding the shooting justified.

The neighbor told deputies he didn't know he hit Hayek's dog or that it soon died, the Thurston County Sheriff's Office said. And his wife told The Associated Press the couple didn't even know the dog belonged to the famous actress.

Deputies investigated after Hayek's dog was found dead Feb. 19 on her property about 70 miles south of Seattle. The office ruled the shooting justified but referred the case to prosecutors for review.

"We didn't even know we hit the dog," neighbor Kim Lund said Monday, adding that her husband held up the pellet gun and shot it to scare the dogs away. She said one of the dogs was on top of her dog at the time.

Ziesemer said Monday that a neighbor told a deputy he was inside his house when he heard what sounded like a dog fight in his garage. The neighbor says he fired one shot from an air rifle and the other two dogs ran off.

AP

Thurston County Sheriff John Snaza speaks to members of the media Monday, Feb. 29, 2016, in Olympia, Wash.

Lund said she and her husband were inside their home watching TV when they heard a ruckus in their garage. She said Hayek's dogs often come over to her property and chase her dogs.

"I'm still coming to terms with all of this, as you can imagine," Lund said. "We didn't even know we killed a dog. To find out we killed a dog that belonged to a high profile person, I'm in shock."

Hayek posted on Instagram Friday that she was mourning the death of her 9-year-old dog named Mozart and hoped authorities would find justice. The 49-year-old actress, who was nominated for an Academy Award for her starring role in the 2002 film "Frida," said Mozart was a loving and loyal companion and didn't deserve a slow and painful death.

Actor Michael C. Hall weds Morgan Macgregor in New York City

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Michael C. Hall is a newlywed.

A spokesman for Hall says the former "Dexter" star married writer Morgan Macgregor on Monday morning at New York City Hall. Publicist Craig Bankey released no other details.

Hall and Macgregor first appeared publicly as a couple in 2012.

Hall has been performing onstage in New York stage since wrapping "Dexter" in 2013. Macgregor is a Los Angeles-based book critic.

This is the 45-year-old actor's third marriage. He was previously wed to actresses Amy Spanger and Jennifer Carpenter.

AP

In this May 4, 2015 file photo, Morgan Macgregor, left, and Michael C. Hall, attend the NYU Tisch School of the Arts 2015 Gala at Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall, in New York.

Oscars get 34.3 million viewers, lowest rating since 2008

NEW YORK (AP)—Academy Awards viewership dipped to its lowest level since 2008 in a year where the movie industry's ability to reflect the nation's diversity was a central issue.

The Nielsen company said Monday preliminary estimates showed 34.3 million people watched Sunday night's telecast, where "Spotlight" won best picture. Last year's show was seen by 37.3 million people.

Since 1990, only two Academy Awards telecasts had fewer viewers: in 2008, when "No Country For Old Men" won best picture, and in 2004, when "Chicago" was honored. The peak came when "Titanic" won a boatload of awards in 1998 and 55 million people tuned in.

The paucity of minority nominees this year led to calls for a boycott among some black stars, including Jada Pinkett Smith and Spike Lee. But Nielsen did not immediately have any ethnic breakdown of Oscar viewership. Generally, the popularity of movies being honored tends to be the biggest factor in whether the audience for the live telecast is up or down.

Rock, in his second time hosting, hardly stayed away from the diversity issue. He peppered the audience with his first three jokes on the topic within 25 seconds.

The most recent awards shows, the Golden Globes and Grammys, also saw ratings declines. The Globes, which honor film and television, were seen by 18.5 million people, down from 19.3 million in 2015. The Grammy telecast hit a seven-year low in viewership.

Eaton apologizes for tweet during Oscars

GLENDALE, Ariz. (AP)—Chicago White Sox outfielder Adam Eaton apologized Monday for a tweet he posted during the Academy Awards telecast.

While host Chris Rock was making his opening monologue Sunday night, Eaton tweeted why "does it always have to be about black and white? #American"

Rock's comments referred to the lack of black nominees at the Oscars, and Eaton said his intention was to discuss equality. Some Twitter followers—Eaton has nearly 35,000—took offense to a statement they felt was vague.

"I feel terrible," Eaton said. "I mean no harm and I apologize. I should not have even gone into that realm.

"In my baseball world, we have equality. Everybody in this room I respect and love, and everybody has an opportunity."

Eaton said he is re-evaluating his dealings with social media.

"I want to have a connection with people and I may step back for a little bit," he said.

AP

In this Monday, Aug. 17, 2015 file photo, Chicago White Sox's Adam Eaton, center, celebrates with the dugout after scoring on a fielders choice during the third inning of a baseball game against the Los Angeles Angels in Anaheim, Calif.

Woman's secret past revealed makes fiance doubt the future

DEAR ABBY: My fiancee and I have known each other since high school. I was the "good kid" with honors and the right parents. She was considered trouble and didn't have the best home life. Rumor had it that she moonlighted as a stripper our senior year, but I always blew it off as false.

Fast-forward 12 years: I ran into her recently, and we decided to have dinner. I fell in love with her on that date. A few months went by and I mentioned the rumors. She wasn't upset and matter-of-factly explained that she did start stripping in high school and continued through college. It bothered me, but the benefits of being with her far outweighed the negatives.

Now that we are engaged, she told me she had to "come clean." She said there were times in college when she had sex with some of her regular clients. I am floored. She basically admitted she had prostituted herself. I don't know what to do. I don't want to blame her for her past indiscretions, but this is a big deal. I don't know how to let it go. Advice, please!

GUY WHO NEEDS ADVICE

DEAR GUY: You now see your fiancee clearly -- warts and all. The problem with "falling in love" (what I define as infatuation) is that you don't yet know who the person IS. Regardless of how your fiancee financed her education, she deserves respect for being honest with you. She has done as much as she can to improve her life. You must now ask yourself if you can see past her past, and if she is someone you would be happy spending the rest of your life with. Remember, I live in Los Angeles, and in this town, her revelation wouldn't necessarily be a deal-breaker.

DEAR ABBY: I met a guy named "Ryan" about 10 weeks ago. We hit it off right away. I admit I had a little crush on him.

About a week after we met, he came out to a group of our mutual friends (me included) as gay. I'm very supportive of him, and it didn't change anything between us at all. Over the last several weeks, we have grown to be best friends and continue to grow closer and closer.

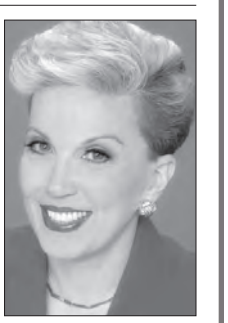
Once I found out Ryan was gay, the rational and practical part of me took over and squashed the crush I had on him in the beginning. But now that feeling is coming back even stronger.

I know our relationship can never be anything more than platonic. I guess I'm just asking how I can get over him while still maintaining our close friendship, because ultimately, that means the world to me, and I don't want to lose it.

FRIEND ONLY, IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR FRIEND ONLY: It's not easy to think rationally when emotions are involved. Ryan may have everything you want in a man, but he will not be a romantic partner for you. If spending time around him becomes too painful, you may have to put some distance between the two of you until you regain your emotional balance.

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

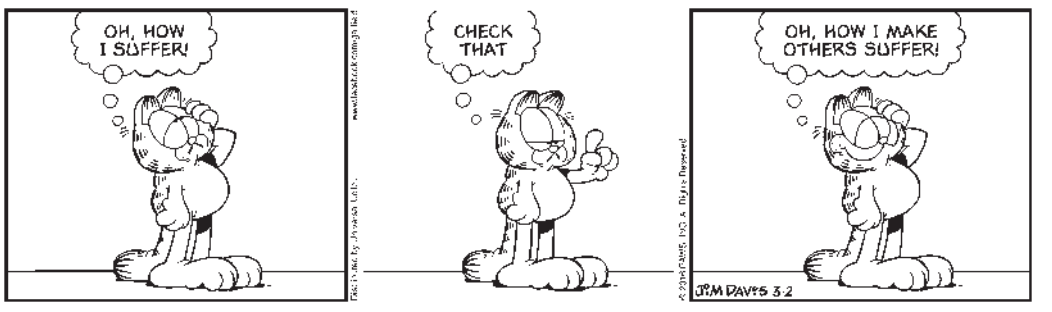
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

OKAY, CALVIN, WE'LL BE BACK IN A COUPLE OF HOURS.
YOU AND HOBBES JUST WATCH TV AND BE GOOD, OKAY?
DID YOU HEAR THAT? WE GET TO WATCH TV!!
HOORAY!
VIDEORAMA? I'D LIKE TO RENT A VCR AND SOME MOVIES!
ASK IF THEY HAVE "ATTACK OF THE COED CANNIBALS."

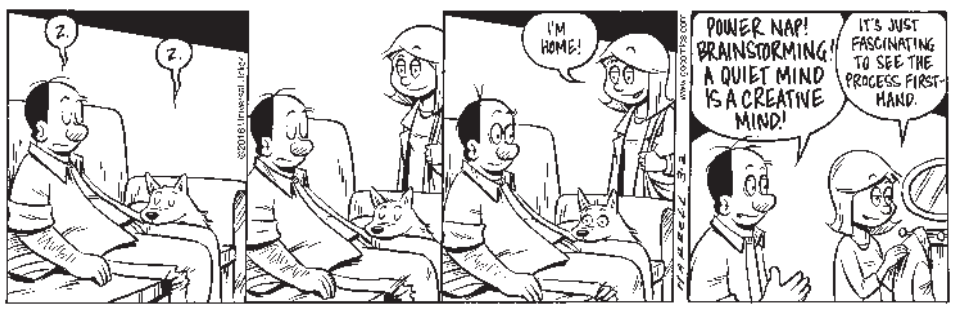
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



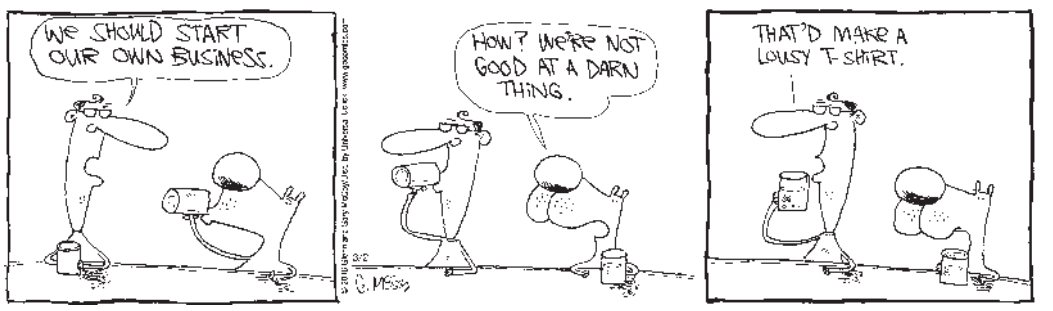
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

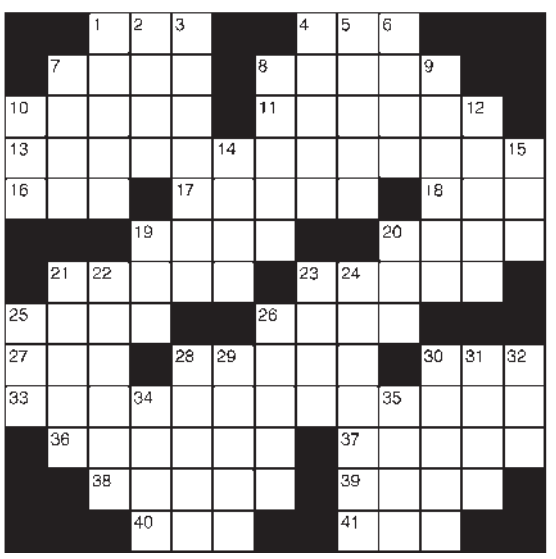
ACROSS
1 Sleuth
4 Rx overseer
7 Prima donna
8 Magna —
10 "Paradise Lost" figure
11 Delivers a keynote
13 Rum cocktail sipped at poolside, maybe
16 Hankering
17 Daddy Warbucks' ward
18 — de cologne
19 "How sweet —!"
20 Small fruit pie
21 Water nymph
23 "— were the days!"
25 "Help Me" singer Mitchell
26 Cheer (for)
27 Nosh
28 Book jacket write-up
30 Witnessed
33 Classic sitcom about a blended family
36 Loan guarantor
37 O. Henry's specialty
38 Peoples' histories
39 Ireland
40 Summer on the Seine
41 Away from NNW

DOWN
1 Tennessee footballer
2 Author Hunter
3 Bach's "Coffee —"
4 Language of Iran
5 Cover with cloth
6 Aleutian island
7 Broad valley
8 Toe woes
9 Dido's lover
10 Covert agent
12 Petrify
14 Oklahoma city
15 Grass shack
19 Afternoon hour on a sundial
20 Nanny's charge
21 — Ark
22 Pay to play
23 Whig rival
24 Avocations
25 Lustrous black
26 Giuliani and Vallee
28 Brittany seaport
29 Starbucks offering
30 Napper's noise
31 Skin breakout
32 Rationale
34 Highland hillside
35 "The Haj" author

Solution time: 24 mins.

S	I	I	M	■	P	E	■	■	S	I	P	S	■	■
E	■	R	E	■	A	R	C	■	O	R	A	L	■	■
E	M	M	A	■	C	R	■	B	B	A	G	E	■	■
P	E	A	N	U	T	S	■	R	E	V	I	E	W	■
■	■	■	N	S	■	M	A	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
P	O	D	E	O	■	C	O	T	■	A	G	E	■	■
O	N	E	■	■	A	H	A	■	■	W	A	G	■	■
C	A	B	B	A	G	E	■	C	E	L	L	O	■	■
■	■	■	A	R	T	■	D	O	■	■	■	■	■	■
A	N	T	■	C	■	A	U	D	U	B	O	N	■	■
C	A	R	■	H	A	G	E	■	D	J	L	Y	■	■
E	P	E	E	■	U	R	L	■	E	R	L	E	■	■
S	E	E	D	■	G	A	S	■	S	P	A	I	■	■

Yesterday's answer 3-2



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Bryce Dallas Howard, 35; Method Man, 45; Daniel Craig, 48; Jon Bon Jovi, 54.

Happy Birthday: Handle whatever comes your way with grace, dignity and empathy. Don't give in to temptation or let anyone talk you into something that will lead to trouble. Good choices aren't always easy to make, especially when faced with peer pressure. Use your intellect and do what's best for you, even if it means moving forward alone. Your numbers are 4, 12, 17, 24, 33, 38, 42.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Take time to treat yourself to something that will make you feel good and look good, as well as give you the incentive you need to forge ahead. Romance is on the rise, and playful action with someone you love will bring you closer together. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): You'll feel pressure if you oppose someone who has as much invested in a project or plan as you do. Use friendly persuasion over brute force and you will find the compromise you need to keep moving forward. Teamwork will pay off. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Listen carefully. Make sure you fully understand what's expected of you before you commit. It's OK to be friendly and to want everyone to like you, but don't let anyone take advantage of you. Focus on self-improvements, not on helping others. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Take control and make decisions based on your gut feelings. Position yourself to be the nucleus of whatever endeavor you embark on, and you will make an impression and gain popularity among your peers. Don't be afraid to be different. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Target the problems that are looming, and offer a solution. Taking charge will bring about new interest from your superiors and could make you a hero in the eyes of your friends and family. Romance is on the rise. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Gravitate toward the people who appreciate you and what you have to offer. Look at the big picture, but don't be too eager to put your cash into something you cannot control. Trust your instincts, not what someone else tells you. ✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Get out with friends or make plans with your significant other. Any form of entertainment, travel or pampering will improve your attitude and give you the incentive to do your best in all aspects of life. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): You will face some opposition at home if you try to do things differently. Do your best to keep your plans a secret until they are fully developed and hard to dispute. Someone from your past will contribute to your success. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Venture down a path that will help you explore personal options regarding your skills, appearances and ways you can change the way you live to suit what you want out of life. Romance is encouraged. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): It's OK to do things differently. Alter your routine and you will keep everyone guessing. A joint venture looks promising and can bring about a development that will improve a personal relationship or your current living arrangement. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Trust in your ability to make good decisions. If you get things done and express unique solutions, it will result in recognition and praise. A positive attitude combined with hard work will result in an unexpected surprise. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Put your energy into achieving your objectives. Less talk and more action will help you avoid criticism. Subtle changes in your approach will be your best and quickest route to success. Avoid letting anger take over. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are charming, adventurous and playful. You are intelligent and impulsive.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	3	7	4	8	1	2	9	
	5						7	
						1		
					5			
		2	9	1	3	4		
			6					
		4						
	7						5	
	9	5	3	2	7	8	6	

Difficulty Level ★★★ 3/02

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

3	4	6	7	1	5	9	2	8
7	9	1	6	2	8	4	3	5
5	2	8	9	3	4	6	7	1
2	1	3	4	7	6	8	5	9
6	7	9	8	5	1	3	4	2
4	8	5	3	9	2	1	6	7
8	3	2	1	4	7	5	9	6
1	5	4	2	6	9	7	8	3
9	6	7	5	8	3	2	1	4

Difficulty Level ★★ 3/01

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

GYM PAIN Solution: 7 letters

R	W	D	S	N	P	F	S	E	L	C	S	U	M	R
A	A	E	H	A	I	T	I	U	S	K	E	S	A	E
L	R	L	O	E	F	A	F	T	C	S	C	C	E	P
U	M	A	U	I	X	E	R	E	N	I	H	N	E	E
C	U	Y	L	C	I	E	N	T	B	E	K	E	G	T
S	P	E	D	L	S	O	R	O	S	S	S	R	A	I
A	T	D	E	S	D	U	R	C	E	F	O	S	M	T
V	B	R	R	N	Ⓔ	E	M	H	I	W	F	I	A	I
O	E	D	E	Ⓡ	A	R	C	O	T	S	N	I	D	O
I	N	T	Ⓞ	N	S	N	E	H	R	O	E	T	T	N
D	C	Ⓢ	K	M	U	N	L	N	R	U	A	E	A	S
R	H	L	R	R	E	O	L	R	I	U	E	S	R	R
A	E	A	C	R	H	N	U	E	Q	A	U	N	G	A
C	S	E	G	N	U	L	P	S	P	S	R	O	E	E
P	H	Y	S	I	C	A	L	T	O	O	F	T	T	T

©2016 Universal Uclick www.wonderword.com Download the Wonderword Game App! 3/2

Abdomen, Aches, Aerobic, Ankle, Arms, Bench, Cardiovascular, Crunches, Damage, Delayed, Ease, Energy, Exercise, Fitness, Foot, Growth, Heat, Knee, Lifts, Lunges, Minor, Muscles, Neck, Neuromuscular, Onset, Physical, Pull, Relief, Repetitions, Rest, Safe, Shoulder, Sore, Squat, Stiff, Strain, Strenuous, Stress, Target, Tears, Tendon, Trainer, Warmup

Yesterday's Answer: Gesture

Treasury 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 or **21** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com. (Contain 130 puzzles.)

CLASSIFIED ADS

EMPLOYMENT

(2) Bookkeeper, (8) Houseworker, (2) Computer Support Specialist. Minimum Salary. Mail resume to MTO Maintenance (Saipan), Inc. at P.O. Box 504053, Saipan, MP 96950.

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Warehouse #3 - Size: 6,000sq/ft
$0.65 per sq/ft. Negotiable

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235-6527/28 or 285-1317

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Tour Guide (1)
Minimum of three years work experience as a Tour Guide. Swimming skill with tour guidance knowledge for the customers in English, Chinese, and Japanese.

Please mail resume no later than March 19, 2016 to PMB 525, Box 10000, Saipan MP 96950 or email it to gaiasaipan@gmail.com
For more information, please call: 484-0305
GAIA, LLC.

Backhoe for Rent
For inquiries, please call
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- General Help Supply Services
- Heavy Equipment Rental
- Auto & Heavy Equipment Repair Shop

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Office Hours: 8:30am-5:30pm, M-F daily

Saipan Tribune

Francisco C. Cabrera
dba Design Florist/Cabrera Funeral

Job Vacancy Announcement

(1) Administrative Assistant
- Must have at least 3 years experience.
- Able to work flexible hours.
- Must have a driver's license.

(1) Funeral Service Assistant
- Must have a driver's license.
- Able to work flexible hours.
- Good personality.

All interested applicants must apply in person.
Cabrera Center Bldg., Beach Road, Garapan

G4S

Job Vacancy Announcement

(10) Lifeguard

Submit applications, police clearance, and copy of certification at G4S Office located at Beach Road Ladera Building, Chalan Lau-lau.
For more information call (670) 233-3238/39 or email at cnmi@gu.g4s.com
www.g4s.mp

EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY: G4S is an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Employer and observes all federal employment opportunity regulations, practices and policies. Federal Law requires presentation of proof of identity and eligibility to work in the United States. We comply with this law on a nondiscriminatory basis. Must be 18 years or older and must be able to speak, read and write English. Open to all qualified U.S. Workers without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex citizenship and is in compliance with Title II of the Genetics Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA). This job is open to all U.S. Veterans, Persons with Disabilities and Women In Non-traditional occupations that are qualified, willing, able and available to perform the job.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP NO.: RFP16-BECQ/DCRM-058

E-BID IS AUTHORIZED ON THIS RFP AND MUST BE SENT TO: procurement@pticom.com NO LATER THAN 10:00 A.M., CHAMORRO STANDARD TIME, UTC +10 HOURS BY MARCH 23, 2016

"2016 SAIPAN LAGOON USE MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE AND REVISION A PROJECT UNDER THE BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND COASTAL QUALITY, DIVISION OF COASTAL MANAGEMENT"

The **Scope of Work** is available on or after **February 24, 2016** from the BECQ office or by e-mail request to Rebecca Skeele at skeele.crm@gmail.com

Questions regarding this project can be made to Rebecca Skeele by phone (670) 664-8313, or by email at skeele.crm@gmail.com no later than the close of business, **March 14, 2016,** Chamorro Standard Time, UTC +10 hours (email is preferred). Responses to questions shall be shared with all prospective proposers.

The government reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any imperfection in a proposal if in the best interest of the CNMI. All proposals shall become the property of the CNMI Government.

/S/ FRANK M. RABAULIMAN
ADMINISTRATOR OF BECQ

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

CTSI Logistics is inviting qualified U.S. workers to apply for the following positions:

Cargo and Freight Agent (1)
Associate's Degree with a minimum of 2 years experience in a logistics, freight brokerage or warehouse services business. Must know how to operate a forklift with certification. Must be able to do strenuous work with some lifting and carrying of small items on the job. Licensed to drive 4x6 wheel closed vans and must have obtained training or certification in handling hazardous materials, Occupational Safety, Hazardous Waste Operation and IAC CCSF authorized screener. Must be proficient in MS Office and Oracle-based programs and available to work on evenings and weekend hours.

A pre-employment drug testing will be required. Salaries will be commensurate with qualification and experience. For applications to be considered, they should submit resume / application to CTSI Logistics, Lower Base not later than March 11, 2016.

We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.
Women, minorities and disabled persons are encouraged to apply.

K.L. CARR ENTERPRISES
P.O. Box 502535, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: 670-323-2428
Email: klcarrenterprises.2014@yahoo.com

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Position: **Accountant/Auditor**
Salary Offered: $15.00/hour
Job Description: Prepares, examines, or analyzes accounting records, financial statements, or other financial reports to assess accuracy, completeness, and conformance to reporting and procedural standards; Reports to management regarding the finances of establishment; Develops, implements, modifies, and documents recordkeeping and accounting systems; Computes taxes owed and prepare tax returns, ensuring compliance with payment, reporting or other tax requirements; Oversees day-to-day activities of office, accounting, shop, as well as field workers; Reviews contracts, project billing, and change orders prepared by other staff and counter check figures prior to finalizing and submission to contract owner; Prepares and generates end of month reports, maintains record keeping and prepares accounts for management information; Prepares annual tax reconciliation, budget, and attend to audit.

Minimum Qualifications: With a college degree of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (Major in Accounting). With at least 7 years of relevant work experience as an Accountant or Auditor.

Place of Employment: Successful candidate will be assigned to work in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

How to Apply: Submit a professional resume to:

K.L. CARR ENTERPRISES, INC.
Office Address: Chalan Pale Arnold, Tanapag, Saipan, CNMI
Phone: 670-323-2428
Email: klcarrenterprises.2014@yahoo.com

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LeBron scores 33 as Cavs hold off Pacers

CLEVELAND (AP)—The rest helped LeBron James. The replay aided the Cavaliers.

James scored 33 points after sitting out a game and Tristan Thompson made two huge plays in the final minute, leading Cleveland to a 100-96 win over the Indiana Pacers on Monday night.

James was given Sunday off by coach Tyronn Lue, who wants to monitor his superstar's playing time down the stretch, and the Cavs were lethargic in a 113-99 loss at Washington. But with James back on the floor, Cleveland played with much more energy and again looked like a team with NBA championship aspirations.

"We showed some mental toughness," James said. "So many lead changes, so many ties. They grabbed the momentum late in the fourth and we were able to keep our composure, get some stops, make some shots and win the ballgame."

Beyond that, the Cavs also caught a break when a 3-pointer by Indiana's Paul George in the fourth quarter was nullified following a video review by the officials.

"Huge," Cavs forward Kevin Love said of the ruling, which reduced Indiana's lead to one. "A game changer right there. That was a huge difference for us."

Matthew Dellavedova hit a tying 3-pointer for the Cavs with 1:13 left before Thompson, who was replaced in the starting lineup by Timofey Mozgov, scored underneath off a pass from James to make it 96-94 with 18 seconds remaining. Thompson then came across the lane to block a short shot by George Hill.

Kyrie Irving made four free throws in the last eight seconds to put away the Pacers. Irving finished with 22 points —he went 11 of 11 from the line—and Thompson added 11 rebounds for the Cavs, who were criticized following Sunday's poor performance by teammate J. R. Smith for not playing harder.

The Cavs recovered with a solid all-around effort, but were pushed to the final seconds by the Pacers.

"The fact that we responded like we did tonight is a good sign," James said. "We put ourselves in dark spots and we have to build our way out of them."

Although it may keep him fresh for the playoffs, James said watching his teammates on Sunday wasn't easy.

"I wish I was on the court. That's what I felt," he said. "I never like my guys having to go out there and go through that. And obviously those guys know they could've played much better than the effort that they gave. You're the leader of a ballclub, you never want to see your guys go through that."

Monta Ellis scored 28 points and George had 23 for the Pacers, who lost their third straight but played much better than in a loss to Portland on Sunday.

George's 3-pointer with 4:46 left had given Indiana a 93-89 lead, but during a timeout with 2:27 left, the officials reviewed the shot and determined it came after the 24-second shot clock had expired. George's bucket was wiped out and James scored on a drive to put the Cavs ahead 91-90.

"It didn't need to be explained at all," Pacers coach Frank Vogel said. "They made the right call. We knew it was coming off. I knew it was coming off."

Cleveland's three wins over Indiana this season have been by a total of 13 points.

"Obviously they're ahead of us, but I do feel like we're pretty evenly matched with anybody in the East," Vogel said. "We can play with this team. We know we can. We just haven't finished."

A recharged James was in attack mode from the start. He scored 12 points in the first quarter and had 31 after three.

AP

Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James (23) passes as Indiana Pacers' Paul George (13) and Myles Turner (33) watch in the first half of an NBA basketball game Monday, Feb. 29, 2016, in Cleveland.

Wizards 116, Sixers 108

In Washington, John Wall scored 16 of his 37 points in the fourth quarter, helping the Wizards rally for the win.

Wall and Marcin Gortat combined for 14 points during a 16-0 fourth-quarter run in Washington's sixth victory in eight games since the All-Star break. Gortat finished with 18 points and a career-high 20 rebounds.

Markieff Morris added 16 points and 13 rebounds in his first double-double with Washington.

Philadelphia played without rookie center Jahlil Okafor, who was sidelined by a right shin bruise. But the 76ers had six players score in double figures, led by Ish Smith's 25 points.

The 76ers were outrebounded 53-32 in their ninth straight loss.

Bucks 128, Rockets 121

In Milwaukee, Giannis Antetokounmpo recorded his second career triple-double with 18 points, 17 rebounds and 11 assists, and the Bucks outlasted the Rockets.

Jabari Parker scored a career-high 36 points for Milwaukee, and Khris Middleton had 30 points.

The Bucks nearly blew a late 13-point lead after the Rockets put together a 9-0 run. After forcing a turnover, Houston's Trevor Ariza was whistled for a 5-second violation on inbounds pass with 20 seconds remaining.

Dwight Howard had 30 points and 13 rebounds for Houston, while Ariza had 20 points and 11 assists.

Grizzlies 103, Nuggets 96

In Denver, Zach Randolph scored 22 points, leading Memphis to the road win.

Matt Barnes had 16 points for the Grizzlies, and Mario Chalmers finished with 15. Memphis won its fifth in a row against the Nuggets, including three meetings this season.

Kenneth Faried had 16 points and 11 rebounds for the Nuggets, who have lost five of six. Gary Harris added 15 points.

Newly signed JaKarr Sampson started in place of injured forward Danilo Gallinari, the Nuggets' leading scorer who is sidelined indefinitely after severely spraining his right ankle Friday at Dallas. Sampson finished with seven points.

Celtics 100, Jazz 95

In Boston, Jae Crowder had 22 points, and the Celtics extended their home win streak to 11.

Isaiah Thomas added 18 points and nine assists. Avery Bradley also finished with 18 points.

The Celtics went in front for good on a 3-pointer by Crowder with less than a minute to play.

Trey Lyles had 18 points and 10 rebounds for the Jazz, who have dropped three in a row. Shelvin Mack added 18 points. Gordon Hayward finished with 16.

Thunder 131, Kings 116

In Sacramento, Russell Westbrook had 20 points, 15 rebounds and 13 assists, leading the Oklahoma City Thunder to a 131-116 victory over the Sacramento Kings on Monday night.

Kevin Durant finished with 27 points, 10 rebounds and six assists as Oklahoma City bounced back from a difficult stretch. The Thunder had dropped four of five, including a heartbreaking overtime loss to Golden State on Saturday night.

Oklahoma City shot 57 percent (47 for 82) from the field, including a 14-for-34 performance from 3-point range. Enes Kanter scored 23 points on 11-for-11 shooting.

Rio's challenges, doping in Russia and Kenya top IOC agenda

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (AP)—With five months to go until the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, the challenges keep piling up.

From the Zika outbreak to severe water pollution, from behind-schedule venues to delayed metro lines, from sluggish ticket sales to cuts in services, from Brazil's deep financial crisis to impeachment proceedings against its president, the buildup to South America's first games faces a long list of concerns.

Rio's final preparations and the status of anti-doping efforts in Russia and Kenya will top the agenda when the International Olympic Committee executive board holds a three-day meeting starting Tuesday in Lausanne, Switzerland.

The board is also expected to discuss progress in identifying refugee athletes who will compete under the IOC flag in Rio, the proposed formation of an independent agency to take over drug-testing for all sports, and plans for the Court of Arbitration for Sport to handle doping sanctions.

With next Saturday marking the five-month countdown to the Aug. 5 opening ceremony at the Maracana Stadium, Brazilian organizers are tackling issues on several fronts. Carlos Nuzman, head of the Rio organizing committee, will give his latest update to the IOC board on Wednesday.

Rio is preparing for the games at a time when Brazil is mired in its worst recession since the 1930s, President Dilma Rousseff is fighting impeachment and the country is dealing with a vast corruption scandal centered on state-controlled oil-and-gas giant Petrobras.

If that weren't enough, Brazil is now at the epicenter of the spread of Zika, the mosquito-borne virus that has been linked to a rise in cases of babies born with abnormally small heads. While the link to microcephaly has not been confirmed, the Zika outbreak has raised concerns among some athletes and fans ahead of the games.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advised Friday that pregnant women consider not going to Brazil and that their male sexual partners use condoms after the trip or abstain from sex during the pregnancy. Women who are trying to become pregnant should talk to their doctors before making the trip, the CDC advised.

The IOC has repeatedly said it is monitoring the situation and following the guidance of the World Health Organization, which has declared Zika a global health emergency but has not issued any travel restrictions for Brazil.

"We're very confident that the athletes and the spectators will enjoy safe conditions in Rio de Janeiro," IOC President Thomas Bach said this month.

Reports: Brady agrees to 2-year extension

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP) — Tom Brady reportedly has agreed to a two-year contract extension with the New England Patriots.

The deal will significantly lessen Brady's salary cap hit for 2016, which would have been about $15 million. He was due to make $9 million next season, plus a $6 million bonus, and $10 million in salary in 2017.

Brady, 38, has often redone his contract to help the Patriots' cap situation. The four-time Super Bowl champion has said he plans to play well into his 40s. The extension would allow him to do so in New England.

The agreement was first reported by ESPN.

Brady also renegotiated his contract in 2013 to help reduce cap hits. New England was $13.6 million under the 2016 cap of $155.27 million before extending Brady.

Brady, of course, is an all-time great who could wind up the NFL's leader in many career passing categories. He's been to six Super Bowls and 10 AFC title games, including the last five.

Some would say he is underpaid for the position given the championship pedigree and his two league MVP awards to go with three Super Bowl MVPs. In 2015, his cap hit of $14 million ranked 14th in the league, behind the likes of Colin Kaepernick and Jay Cutler. He might not rank even that high in 2016.

Meanwhile, in North Carolina, the NFC champion Carolina Panthers have a $14 million decision to make.

The Panthers have until the NFL-imposed 4 p.m. EST Tuesday deadline to decide on whether to use the franchise tag on All-Pro cornerback Josh Norman, who had a breakout season in 2015 and helped them reach the Super Bowl for the first time in 12 years.

The team began negotiations with Norman's agents last week at the NFL Scouting Combine in Indianapolis in hopes of reaching a long-term contract with the team's top cornerback. While talks are ongoing, the Panthers could use the franchise tag in the meantime essentially taking Norman off the free agent market.

Panthers general manager Dave Gettleman has repeatedly said that using the franchise tag on Norman—a move that would pay him $13.952 million guaranteed in 2016— is a possibility.

Gettleman said at a news conference last week in Indianapolis that he "isn't in the business of developing players for other teams" and wants to keep the team's core players together

Norman was a fifth-round draft pick by the Panthers in 2012 out of Coastal Carolina and has settled nicely into a starter role after a bumpy start with Carolina.

"We are going to have the conversation and do the best we can. We are going to try to get a deal done," Gettleman said. "If not, there are options, and maybe the tag gets used."

Norman did not return phone calls Monday.

The 28-year-old Norman had four interceptions in the first four games of the 2015 season, returning two of those for touchdowns. One of those interceptions came when he leaped backward in the end zone and brought down a Luke McCown pass in the final minutes, helping Carolina secure a win against the New Orleans Saints and put Norman on the national radar.

After Norman was named NFC defensive player of the month for September teams rarely threw to his side of the field. Although he didn't intercept a pass the rest of the season, Norman was selected to his first Pro Bowl and earned All-Pro honors.

Opposing QBs had a 54.0 QB rating when throwing at Norman—the lowest allowed by all NFL corners.

Gettleman has used the franchise tag before.

He did it in 2014 on defensive end Greg Hardy, and the move turned out to be a disaster. Shortly after signing the tender, Hardy found himself in the middle of a domestic abuse case and the league eventually held him out of all but one game while investigating the issue. The Panthers didn't attempt to re-sign Hardy last season and he was joined the Dallas Cowboys as an unrestricted free agent.

If the Panthers use the franchise tag on Norman they can continue to negotiate a long-term deal with him until July 13.

If they can't sign him to a long-term deal before the season, Norman would play under the one-year contract

It shouldn't devastate their salary cap. They enter the offseason about $26 million under the league's 2016 salary cap and most of their top players are under contract for next season with the exception of All-Pro fullback Mike Tolbert.

AP

In this Sunday, Jan. 3, 2016 file photo, New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady (12) watches his teammate during their game against the Miami Dolphins in Miami Gardens, Fla.

Woods keeps everyone guessing

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. (AP)—Adam Scott knew the only way for him to remain relevant was to win golf tournaments.

Tiger Woods has it far easier. All he had to do was hit one shot in a simulator.

The Honda Classic did not lack for activity, even without the beer-drinking bozos leaning over the railing of grandstands on the 17th hole to shout at Sergio Garcia that the Spaniard should "go back to the European Tour" and at Adam Scott to put "two more (balls) in the water."

It started with Jack Nicklaus hosting nearly two dozen potential Ryder Cup players for dinner, a treat for anyone among the top 40 in the U.S. standings. He said he talked about how to prepare for big events, though it was not clear what else could be gleaned from the night except to hang out with golf's greatest champion.

"I can't imagine how them coming over to have dinner at an old man's house is going to help any," Nicklaus said.

It ended with Scott's first victory in 21 months. The affable Aussie lost a chance at one of the best rounds of his career when he made a quadruple bogey on the 15th hole Saturday and still shot 66. The next day, he became a footnote in PGA Tour history as the first player since 2009 to make a quadruple bogey and still win the tournament.

Through it all, what generated the most conversation across the spectrum was Woods.

In a span of five days, speculation ranged from Woods being unable to sit in a chair to Woods taking full swings with the driver. A rumor on social media suggested his back was so bad from two surgeries late last year that he had to recline his passenger's seat as someone else drove his car. On Wednesday, he posted a video on Twitter that showed him hitting a 9-iron in a golf simulator. A report followed the next day that he was swinging a driver.

Perhaps that's why Nicklaus was so hesitant to say anything on Sunday.

Woods is a Ryder Cup vice captain and was at the Nicklaus dinner, and the players said he looked to be doing well. So did Nicklaus.

"He says he was feeling good ... and he was able to stand over a putt and chip now without having any leg pain and so forth," Nicklaus said. "We didn't really talk a whole lot about it. He doesn't have a timetable for returning or anything else.

"I think he was just ... he's pretty private about what his situation is, and I don't blame him," Nicklaus added. "Because every time he opens his mouth, there's nothing but articles written about speculation about Tiger. And I don't want to break his ... he likes it when we talk. We talk about different things. I just don't think it's my place to expound on Tiger's health and so forth."

What does it all mean?

No one can say for sure, except the golfing public seems to be in a bigger rush for Woods to return than he is.

The best guess is that if Woods has learned anything, he will return later rather than sooner. He came back too early from leg injuries in 2011, withdrew after 42 on the front nine at The Players Championship and sat out three months. He came back too soon from back surgery that knocked him out of the Masters and U.S. Open in 2014. He played 11 tournaments over the next year and was as irrelevant as he has ever been on the golf course.

That's what makes all the speculation about Woods so fascinating. He seems to be relevant as long as he's not playing. In place of his recent performance are memories of a player the likes of which has not been seen by any of the four players who have been No. 1 since Woods last won a tournament.

Nicklaus used to always say he thought Woods would break his record of 18 professional majors until one day Nicklaus was so tired of the same question that he asked the audience what kind of headlines he would make if he ever said differently.

It's not about records. It's about playing.

Nicklaus said he told Woods, "Nobody wants their records to be broken, but I don't want you not to have the ability to have that opportunity."

For now, the most trusted reports from those who were at the Nicklaus dinner. Phil Mickelson said he was fun, social, laughing. Ryder Cup captain Davis Love III used words like "fit" and "happy" to describe Woods.

Jimmy Walker brought the levity.

"I talked to him just a second," Walker said. "I said, 'Wow, you're standing up and you're not dead.' He said, 'I know. That's how everybody thinks I am now—dead.'"

Imagine what it will be like at the tournament where Woods returns to golf, whenever that might be. And then imagine how long before the fans realize he is a 40-year-old with four surgeries on his knee and three surgeries on his back.

Everyone wants to see Woods play again, as long as he plays like the Woods they once knew.

Meanwhile, Scott became relevant again. He is a PGA Tour winner again, even with a short putter, and moved back into the top 10 at No. 9 in the world.

Woods fell one spot to No. 446.

Arsenal throwing away chance to top Premier League

LONDON (AP)—If he's celebrating with the Premier League trophy in May, Arsene Wenger's attempts to head off another bout of abuse will seem reasonable.

"Let's not go overboard," the Arsenal manager cautioned after failing again to win at Manchester United.

Despite Sunday's 3-2 loss, Arsenal remains third in the Premier League, Leicester is only five points in front and there are still 33 points to play for.

"I cannot fault our commitment and spirit and desire," Wenger said of his players.

In reality, they lack the fighting spirit and doggedness to grind out the wins required to end a 12-year-old title drought.

In the 20th anniversary year of his appointment, Wenger is fast running out of excuses, particularly when the teams above Arsenal are Leicester and Tottenham.

Leader Leicester has never won the league. Tottenham, whose last title came in 1961, hosts Arsenal in the north London derby on Saturday.

Not even Alex Ferguson's retirement and the ensuing disarray under David Moyes and Louis van Gaal has enabled Arsenal to end its Old Trafford hoodoo.

AP

Manchester United's Memphis Depay, right challenges Arsenal's Hector Bellerin for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Manchester United and Arsenal at Old Trafford Stadium, Manchester, England, Sunday, Feb. 28, 2016.

Arsenal last won at United in the league in September 2006. Since then lesser teams — from Norwich to Swansea—have all emerged victorious at a ground that was renowned as a fortress under Ferguson.

Arsenal has rarely been presented with a better chance to win at the record 20-time champions than on Sunday. It was a patched-up United defense and injuries up front forced Van Gaal into handing Marcus Rashford his first Premier League appearance in place of the sidelined Wayne Rooney.

It's too early to declare Rashford a teen sensation. But the 18-year-old academy graduate followed up his debut double in the Europa League on Thursday with another brace on Sunday. Rashford's emergence highlighted Arsenal's deficiencies developing talent within in its own youth system.

Island's Best, GMI Markets win debuts

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Island's Best Choice and GMI Market won their respective debuts in the DL Corp Invitational Basketball League Season 5 in contrasting fashions last Thursday at the San Antonio court.

In the first game, Island's Best topped Kauila Enterprises, 85-72, while GMI Market nosed out San Antonio, 89-87, in the second match.

GMI Market right from the start, but could not pull away against the defending champion San Antonio and needed a lift from Mike Ito and Jethro Cruz' free throws in the homestretch to foil its foe's comeback bid. Ito knocked in 8 points in the fourth period, including two triples, while Cruz scored all his 4 points in the final canto from the foul line to hand San Antonio back-to-back losses. San Antonio dropped the season-opening game against JP World/Mobil, 69-85.

Cruz and Ito tallied double figures in the close win with the former firing a team-high 23 markers and Ito adding 18. Greg Sablan and Ron Atalig chipped in 10 apiece. Jack Aranda paced San Antonio with his 25 points, while Jaymark De Guzman contributed 21.

In the curtain-raiser, Island's Best Choice played solid offense in the first half, but had to withstand Kauila's third-quarter rally to take the 13-point winning margin.

Island's Best registered 25 points apiece in the first and second quarters to build a 50-32 halftime advantage. Matt Duenas and Paolo Sanguyo teamed up in the strong start, combining for 22 markers in the first half.

The 1-2 punch then slowed down in the third period, allowing Kauila to trim the deficit to single digit, 57-64. Elmer Esdrelon anchored Kauila's fightback in the third, firing 10 points.

Threatened, Duenas and Sanguyo brought order back to Island's Choice in the final canto, teaming up for 17 more points, which came in succession.

Duenas led all scorers with his 28 markers, while Sanguyo had 19 in his Saipan basketball debut.

First Game:

Island's Best Choice 85 — Duenas 28, Sanguyo 19, De Vero 12, Bongolan 11, Odicta 8, Usi 5, Aniciete 2.

Kauila Enterprises 72 — Esdrelon 17, Guiang 13, De Guzman 13, Viray 11, Santos 10, Inos 10, Rueda 2.

Scoring by quarters: 25-16, 50-32, 64-57, 85-72.

Second Game

GMI Market 89— Cruz 23, Ito 18, Sablan 10, Atalig 10, Ong 7, Kintaro 6, Nakashima 6, Alipio 5, Tekopua 4.

San Antonio 87 — Aranda 25, De Guzman 21, Barbo 13, Dela Rosa 13, Saturno 7, Rabasto 4, Fidelino 2, Espinosa 2.

Scoring by quarters: 20-14, 44-37, 66-59, 89-87.

MIEKO

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abeth Orchard and Slack.

"I did not get the results that I wanted in XTERRA Philippines last month. I trained hard after I came back so hopefully I am ready," the 37-yeard-old pro said.

Though this year's pro field has a short list, Carey is happy that more locals are competing in Tagaman. As of yesterday, 123 have signed up for the event with majority of them based on Saipan. Guam, Japan, and Korea also have a couple of entries with the latter having the lone pro in the men's field in Kaon Cho. The Olympic distance course (1.5K swim, 40K bike, and 10K run) has drawn the most triathletes with about 100, while the Half Ironman division (1.9K swim, 90K bike, and 21.1K run) has lured Korean and Japanese age group participants.

"I saw more than 100 athletes racing this year in Tagaman. It is always very nice to have many athletes, especially local people. I thanked MVA which keeps organizing this event and Pivot," Carey said. "I also would like to thank Tyce (Mister) and his family for letting me stay with them and Mamiko (Berger) for picking up my bike," the Guam pro added.

Meanwhile, T Galleria and DFS Saipan are again supporting the Saipan Sportsfest, which features this weekend's Tagaman and the XTERRA Saipan Championship on March 12.

"Year after year, T Galleria has supported Marianas Visitors Authority and its sports tourism efforts," said race director Eric Tydingco in a press release sent to *Saipan Tribune*. "We are extremely fortunate to have such a great partnership with the entire DFS team to make the Sportsfest a fantastic event."

According to Tydingco, members of the DFS team will be seen during both events as race participants, volunteers, and course marshals.

"We could not be prouder to once again sponsor both the Tagaman and XTERRA triathlons," DFS Saipan president Marian Aldan-Pierce said. "It's truly rewarding to work alongside MVA to continue building the legacy of Saipan Sportsfest, contributing our efforts to share Saipan's local culture and community with these phenomenal athletes."

For more information on Saipan Sportsfest, visit saipansportsfest.com.

SUN

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Guang delivered the first goal for the division leader in the 13th minute, while Choi nailed his pair in the second half, posting his first in the 53rd and the second 14 minutes later. Timothy Tawanpiy knocked in the lone goal for the Thundercats with his shot in the 60th.

In the other Division 2 game last Sunday, Shirley's FC earned its second straight victory after dropping its first two games following a 3-2 triumph over World Resort.

Kazuaki Togo posted two goals for Shirley's, including the go-ahead in the 68th minute. He logged the other goal seven minutes earlier to knot the count, 2-2. Kosuke Sato handed Shirley's its first goal in the 16th minute and the team managed to keep the upper hand at the break as World Resort remained quiet in the opening frame.

World Resort then found its rhythm in the second half with Juanito Tiamzon putting his team on the board and tying the match with his conversion in the 51st minute. A goal from Daniel Agulto five minutes later allowed World Resort to grab the lead before Togo forced the second deadlock in the 61st and then regained the driver's seat for Shirley's in the 68th.

In other results in Division 2, Kanoa waltzed past the CNMI Women's National Team last Saturday, 4-0.

Jae Kwang Oh gave Kanoa two goals, while Owen Ji and Ho Jin Woo contributed one apiece. Kanoa registered its first goal right in the opening minute off Ji's shot, while Kwang made it a 2-0 lead in the 22nd. Kanoa went on to close the opening frame with a 3-0 advantage after Woo added one more in the 35th, while Kwang wrapped things up for the winning team with his second goal in the 66th.

DIVISION 1
KFAS 2, MP United 1

Korean Football Association moved on top of the division after edging MP United.

Edwin Kim and Jong Gu Gil scored one goal apiece for KFAS, which now has a 2-0-0 record to lead Division 1. Kim lit up the board for KFAS first with his shot in the 10th minute, while Gil found the back of the net in the 53rd.

MP United, which dropped to a 1-0-1 mark for fourth place in the five-team field, drew its lone goal from Joe Miller in the 29th minute.

Paire/Inter 2, Tan Holdings 1

Paire/Inter Godfather's also got its second win last weekend after outclassing Tan Holdings,

Chris Nelson knocked in the pair of goals for Paire/Inter Godfather's, making both of them in the second half to overhaul a 0-1 deficit at halftime.

Tan Holdings led in the first half, thanks to Sean Perez's early goal in the fifth minute. Tan Holdings (1-0-1) hung on to the upper hand for awhile before Nelson picked up the cudgels for Paire/Inter Godfather's and got back-to-back goals with his first recorded in the 62nd and the second three minutes later.

With the win, Paire/Inter Godfather's shadows KFAS as the former now holds a 2-0-1 mark.

9

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U14 age group and the ranking tournaments under this program are patterned after the ITF Junior Circuit, which features U18 players. The OTF Junior Circuit had its pilot program (boys division only) late last year with Schorr and Song making it to the Top 5 and a couple more CNMI players rounding out the Top 30 list.

"It gives the best players around the Pacific to challenge each other and earn ranking points. There are four tournaments for this season and obviously the players with the most points get the top ranking and bragging rights at the end of the year. OTF-member countries select one local event from their calendar and submit rankings for consideration," Race said.

In the CNMI, NMITA chose the 7th Tan Holdings Tennis Classic held in November and December last year as its ranking tournament. Guam will have its own this month, while the last two will be the North Pacific Regional Championships (the east and west group will have theirs) and the Pacific Oceania Junior Championships. The North regional will be held on Saipan from June 13 to 18, while the POJC will take place in August in Fiji.

The Commonwealth players will compete in the second ranking event well-prepared as they just finished two tournaments spread in four weekends. All nine participated and majority won in the 2016 White Coconut Tennis Classic and the 16th PIC Tennis Championships.

In the PIC tournament, Woo bagged both the boys U12 and U14 singles crowns, while Paik was the runner-up, while Schorr took the boys U16 crown. Lee made it to the semis of the boys U14 singles in the same competition, while Song lost in the U16 semis.

In the girls division of the PIC tournament, Miyawaki and Kaga were the champion and runner-up in the U14 age group, while Raulerson got the U14 crown in the White Coconut contest. Gregoire was a semifinalist in the White Coconut Tennis Classic.

16th PIC Tennis Championships Week 2

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Gary Ramsey serves to Donn Dunlop during their men's 4.0 singles game in the 16th PIC Tennis Championships last weekend at the Pacific Islands Club courts.

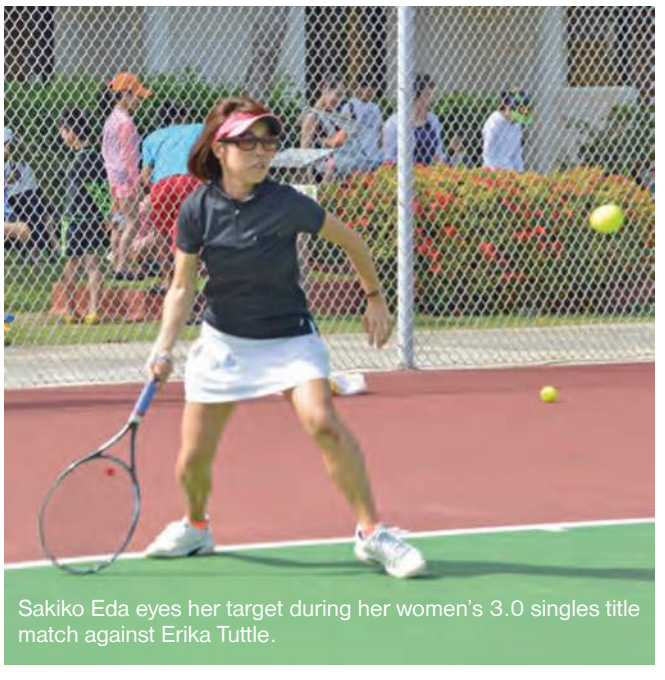
Donn Dunlop makes a baseline return to Gary Ramsey.

Richard Steele gets ready to serve.

Erika Tuttle goes for a return from the sideline.

Rintaro Miyawaki breaks Daniel Kang's serve during their boys U16 doubles game. Miyawaki teamed up with Richard Steele, while Kang partnered with Seung Jin Paik.

Seung Jin Paik makes a backhand slice.



Sakiko Eda eyes her target during her women's 3.0 singles title match against Erika Tuttle.

Daniel Kang, left, exchanges high-fives with Seung Jin Paik after scoring a point.

LeBron scores 33 as Cavs hold off Pacers

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Sun Palace grabs Division 2 lead

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Sun Palace's Ji Chun Zhang, left, and the Thundercats' Josh Kim ward off each other as they run after the ball during the second half of their Division 2 game in the M-League last Sunday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Sun Palace took away the Division 2 lead from the Thundercats after recording a 3-1 win during their game in the 2016 M-League last Sunday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

Sang Ho Choi made a double to help Sun Palace beat the Thundercats, while Zhi Jin Guang scored the other goal. Sun Palace improved to a 2-1-0 win-draw-loss mark ahead of the Thundecats (2-1-1), Shirley's FC (2-0-2), Kanoa (1-1-1), World Resort (1-1-2), and the CNMI Women's National Team (1-0-3).

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9 tennis players off to Guam for OTF Junior Circuit event

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association is sending nine players to Guam later this month to participate in an Oceania Tennis Federation Junior Circuit-ranking tournament.

NMITA official and CNMI coach Jeff Race said the Commonwealth will be fielding a five-player boys team and four-member girls squad in the Guam event, which will run from March 24 to 27. The boys crew is composed of Robbie Schorr, Ken Song, Sean Lee, Ji Min Woo, and Seung Jin Paik, while Malika Miyawaki leads the girls team, which also has Conatsu Kaga, Asia Raulerson, and Maria Gregoire.

Race explained that the OTF Junior Circuit is for players in the

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Robbie Schorr returns to Colin Ramsey during their semis game in the boys U16 singles event in last month's 2016 White Coconut Tennis Classic at the Pacific Islands Club courts.

Mieko guns for back-to-back titles

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Former Saipan triathlete Mieko Carey joined the short list of pros that will compete in this Saturday's 2016 Tagaman Triathlon.

"Yes, I am going to race Tagaman. I am looking forward to going back to my second home. I am arriving there this Thursday," said Carey, who will be out to defend her women's title against Switzerland's Renata Bucher and Australia's Belinda Hadden.

Carey topped last year's women's race after completing the Half Ironman course in 4:48.15. She was the lone triathlete in her field to make it to the finish line under the five-hour mark as the runner-up Bucher posted 5:15:54 and Hadden registered a fourth-best 5:33:02. United Kingdom's Daz Parker (5:18:59) and Saipan's very own Kimiko McKagan (6:10:46) were ranked third and sixth, respectively, and will be missing this year's race along with United Kingdom's Jacqui Slack and Austria's Carina Wasle.

The now Guam-based Carey is slightly favored to get her second straight Half Ironman title in Tagaman due to her familiarity with the course. However, she does not want to be overconfident, as she knows her competitors are well-prepared for this weekend's race.

"Half Ironman distance is always a challenge, mentally and physically, especially under the Saipan weather. I hope I can survive and do my race," said Carey, whose recent competition was last month's XTERRA Philippines where she finished third behind Eliz-

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Mieko Carey heads to the course during the swim leg of last month's XTERRA Philippines in Albay. Carey will be back on Saipan for this weekend's Tagaman Triathlon.